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## ABSTRACT

This study focused on language and literacy learning in a group of Cambodian families in Philadelphia (Pennsylvania) linked locally by an English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) class, and more broadly by common histories, culture, and language. Over a period of 3 years, the researcher looked at: broad patterns of language and literacy use in this community; its prevalent language and literacy attitudes; the nature of literacy development in a Cambodian community; similarities and differences in adults' and children's literacy behavior and development; and the role of the native language. Interpretations presented in the report are drawn from both qualitative and quantitative data. It is concluded that the children's competencies in English, the language of wider communication, are reflected in new relationships of knowledge and power within the families. However, these new relations do not appear to have upset entirely the old ones. In the school context, the study finds a number of different approaches to how languages should be learned and used in the classroom. A lack of support, either locally or at the state level, was found for educational programs to develop biliteracy skills, despite the potential for such skills among both adults and children within the community. Appended are inventories of fieldnotes from 1990-91 and 1993; inventory of interview notes; and interview protocol. Contains 90 references. (MSE) (Adjunct ERIC Clearinghouse on Literacy Education)

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LANGUAGE AND LITERACY DEVELOPMENT  
IN A CAMBODIAN COMMUNITY IN PHILADELPHIA

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A DISSERTATION

in

Education

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## ABSTRACT

LANGUAGE AND LITERACY DEVELOPMENT  
IN A CAMBODIAN COMMUNITY IN PHILADELPHIA

JOEL CARLTON HARDMAN

This dissertation focuses on learning in a group of families linked locally by an adult ESL class, and more largely linked by common histories, cultures, languages, and national origins. The interpretations presented in the dissertation draw on both qualitative and quantitative analyses of the data collected over three years, the goal being to describe and compare language and literacy use, attitudes, and development as observed among adults and children in this Cambodian community. Regarding language and literacy use at home, this study concludes that new relations of power and knowledge in the families reflects the children's competencies in the language of wider communication in this society which the parents do not have. However, these new relations do not entirely upset the old ones. In the school context, this study finds multiple voices jostling to define how languages should be learned and used in the classroom. It remains the case that there is a lack of support, either locally or at the state level, for educational programs in this community which would actively develop biliteracy skills. It is shown that there is a great *possibility* for family biliteracy in this community - that more-capable siblings can follow up on their understandings of their parents' desires for language and literacy maintenance. In either child, adult or family literacy programs, the 'funds of knowledge' that both parents and children are able to pass on to each other should be tapped.

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## Chapter One

### Introduction:

**A personal statement of the researcher's relationship  
with the community, and the purpose of the research**

This is a study of learning in a Cambodian community. I use 'a' quite deliberately. I am focusing on a group of families linked locally by an adult ESL class, and more largely linked by common histories, cultures, languages, and national origins. However, I do not intend to present this community as representative of *the* Cambodian community in the United States (or anywhere else). It is quite simply *a* network of families bound by certain commonalities which allow me as researcher to immerse myself in their social lives, and in a single history, a single language. The intention is not to generalize to the educational needs of the Cambodian community at large, but to tell a story about the sociolinguistic context of learning in a certain immigrant community, and in so doing to say something about the relationship between language diversity and education in the United States.

### The Topic

I have been observing children and adults learning English in the West Philadelphia Cambodian community off and on for almost six years. On one hand, I have seen an elementary school teacher who thinks Cambodian parents do not care about their children's education because they don't show up for conferences and don't sign homework. The teacher complains that

when Cambodian parents do show up for conferences they don't ask any questions and seem to want to leave as soon as possible. On the other hand, I have seen Cambodian parents who bring their children with them to an adult ESL class I have observed and taught, parents who often express concerns about their children's school work, parents who take their children to the library everyday, and parents who work hard to gain the skills they need to work with their children at home and communicate with the schools.

Why does this great gap exist between institutional perceptions and Cambodian parental attitudes? There is no denying that a wide culture and language gap exists between the two. The director of a Southeast Asian community association told me that parents in Cambodia do not go to their child's school unless they or their child have done something wrong. Combine this cultural attitude with a low level of English, and it's easy to see why a Cambodian parent would be afraid to go to school, and why if they do, they are unable to express their concern for and commitment to their child's education. At home, many may not sign their children's homework because they can't understand it or don't know what they're signing.

Yet cultural and linguistic difference in itself is not enough of an explanation for the gap. The real explanation lies in understanding how and why these differences become a gap. In the first place, the ecology of literacy and literacy acquisition (how literacy activities are approached and constructed interactionally, in time and space, by who and for what purposes<sup>1</sup>) in non-English speaking communities is poorly understood by

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<sup>1</sup>Bartoli and Botel (1988) describe an ecological approach to reading and writing as focusing on "social interaction variables, interdependencies, and social relationships that shape and give meaning to language learning" (2).

both teachers and educational researchers. This is true of literacy in most minority communities, but especially true for the more marginal ones. Literacy development in the Cambodian community is poorly understood by and does not necessarily fit with the schools. This is the argument of the proponents of the "cultural difference" explanation for low minority student achievement in schools (cf. papers in the special issue of Anthropology and Education Quarterly [1987, vol. 18, no. 4] by Jacob and Jordan, Vogt et al., Moll and Diaz, Erickson).

Though I am not specifically interested in the issue of student failure, it is relevant to the experience of language-minority students in school. For this study I am more interested in how the same misunderstandings that in some cases lead to poor school achievement, also influence parents' and children's attitudes toward their native language, literacy, and culture and are integral to the literacy-mediated relationships that develop in families.

Furthermore, the explanation for the gap between school perceptions of the Cambodian community and Cambodian attitudes toward school involves the realization that for social/political/economic reasons, the culture of literacy development in the Cambodian community is not allowed to fit with that of the schools. Schools push the students and their voices away and the students resist the school. This point of view on low minority student achievement is discussed in the works of Ogbu (1987), McDermott (1987), Fine (1989) and others.

Difference can lead to inequality and social conflict (see Hymes, 1980: 52-54). Conversely, social conflict can lead to differentiation, what Gregory Bateson called 'schismogenesis' (1936). For example, Labov's Martha's Vineyard study (1972) showed how the older settled community there exaggerated features of its speech in order to differentiate themselves from



new arrivals. Both processes (difference leading to inequality, conflict leading to differentiation) need to be taken into account when examining educational issues facing refugee communities, who are themselves confronting both tremendous cultural conflict and change.

### **The Research Questions**

The purpose of my research has been to determine: 1) what literacy development looks like when displayed by adults and children in the community, 2) what differences exist between the literacy development of children and of adults in this community, and 3) how these differences are related to the maintenance and change of native language and culture. The questions I would like to find answers to are the following:<sup>2</sup>

#### **Descriptive**

1. What are the broad patterns of language and literacy use in this community?
2. What language and literacy attitudes are prevalent in this community?
3. What does literacy development look like in a Cambodian community?

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<sup>2</sup>More detailed and operationalized versions of these questions, along with my research plan, are presented in chapter three.

- a. What types of communicative and functional acts<sup>3</sup> do adults display during tasks related to English literacy development?
- b. What types of acts do children display during literacy events?
- c. Who helps whom, how, with what kind of literacy activities?

### Comparative

4. How are the adults' acts during literacy events different from or similar to the types of acts the children display?
5. What are the differences between how parents are engaged with each other's and their children's literacy development and how children are engaged with each other's and their parent's literacy development?

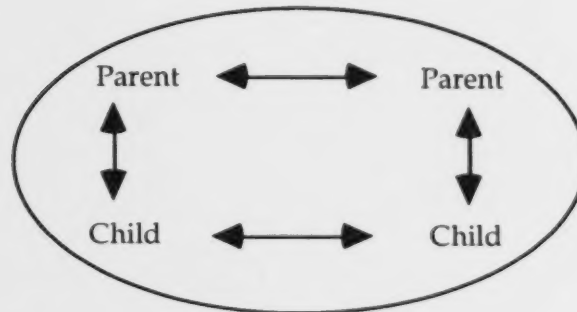


**Figure 1.1:** *Engagement in literacy events*

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<sup>3</sup>Saville-Troike (1982), drawing from Hymes' (1972: 56-57) situation/event/act distinction, describes a communicative act as "a single interactional function, such as a referential statement, a request, or a command, [which] may be either verbal or non-verbal" (29-30)

### Interpretive

6. What is the role of the native language in community members' development of English competencies (oral and literate)?
7. What is the relationship between the patterns of language use and attitudes, the types of acts displayed during literacy events, and the maintenance or change of language, literacy and culture in this community?

These questions interact with each other; answering the comparative questions requires answers of the descriptive ones. In reality it would be impossible, for example, to answer 4 without answering 3b. They are all different tacks on getting at essentially the same thing: the relationship between the different systems of literacy development impacting upon learning in the Cambodian families which are part of this study. Schematically, the relationships can be envisioned as shown in figure 1.2 below:

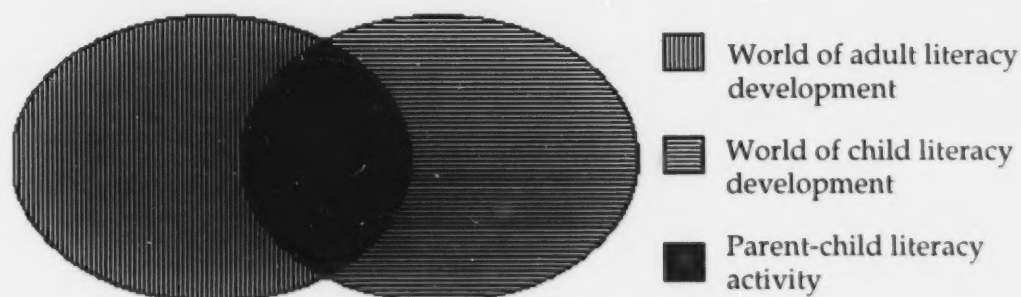


**Figure 1.2:** *Different systems of literacy development*

'Adult literacy development' refers mostly to English literacy development in adult ESL programs, although there are a few instances where adults are

developing native language literacy. Also, any instance of their use of native language literacy can be seen as contributing to its development, in the sense that a prerequisite to the development of a language is to have a functional domain of use. 'Child literacy development' refers to children at work and play with their peers at home, at summer school, and at the public library. 'Parent-child literacy activity' refers to both Khmer and English literacy, to children doing their homework in English, to parents teaching Khmer to their children, to parents studying English with their children's help. These are all scenes I have been observing for this study.

This dissertation is not organized around a simple one-to-one correspondence between research questions and chapters. That is, question one is not answered in chapter one, question two in chapter two, and so on. There is no one question I could answer fully without having answered parts of the other six. Because the descriptive, comparative, and interpretive questions are multi-faceted and interrelated, I go about answering them in various ways in chapters four through eight. These chapters are organized in a broad thematic manner: language use and attitudes at home (4), language use in the classroom (5), parent-child interaction during literacy events (6), and the macro-sociolinguistic context of language and literacy use in this community (7). Most of my research questions cut across all of these social scenes, so in each chapter I contribute an added component to a full answer for each question.

There are two main sites where I have regularly observed: an Adult ESL class for Cambodians, and homes in which I could see adults and children working together on literacy-related tasks. Other observation sites visited include the local library and a summer program for Southeast Asian children. I had one and a half year's worth of experience observing and

teaching in an adult ESL class for Southeast Asian refugees as this study began. Before that experience I had visited a classroom in the local elementary school off and on for a year. Over one past summer I made observations during weekly visits to a single home in this community. These activities formed part of a larger on-going research project.<sup>4</sup> Because the adult ESL class has been my main point of entry into the community, I used it as the primary means for becoming engaged in the home lives of families.

The ESL class for Southeast Asians was founded about six years ago by the Southeast Asian Community Association (SACA<sup>5</sup>). SACA is made up of Cambodian, Chinese, Hmong, Lao, and Vietnamese associations. It was formed in 1979 to address important issues and concerns common to the newly arriving Southeast Asian refugees. The number of ESL students of Asian backgrounds in Pennsylvania rose from 64,379 to 117,430 in 1990. Of those, 90,787 lacked English proficiency (Pennsylvania Department of Education 1992). The founders of the coalition were especially concerned with issues such as gangs and fighting, drugs, and joblessness (intv., director of SACA, 7.27.90).

The ESL program is a part of SACA's program in Adult Basic Education. At its founding the director of SACA saw the primary goal as basic

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<sup>4</sup> This project, "Literacy in Two Languages," is conducted by Dr. Nancy Hornberger. The research presented here has been conducted under the auspices of this project, and has been partly funded by the National Center on Adult Literacy.

<sup>5</sup> The name of this association, along with the names of all individuals referred to in this study, are pseudonyms.

or "survival" English skills: reading the gas bill, reading street signs, etc. The majority of SACA's students are dependent on public assistance and are unemployed. A demographic profile of SACA's clients in the Philadelphia area shows average incomes of less than \$12,000 per year, families with an average of 6-7 children, and adults with little school experience. Because the students are almost all mothers of school-age children, the director sees it as important for them to be able to communicate with their children's teachers (SACA, personal communication). For the first two years of my observations, the class was held in the basement of a row-house in West Philadelphia, but it has since moved to another site.

At the beginning of my association with SACA, the Cambodian ESL class was held four afternoons a week for two hours. The teacher for three of those classes was a Cambodian woman in her twenties. The students were almost all women, between 25 and 35 years old, who had come to the US in the last five years. This following year, the class split into beginning and intermediate levels. The beginning class was taught by a man from Vietnam who speaks Cambodian and studied in Cambodia. The intermediate class was taught by myself. My class was regularly attended by about three Cambodian women, and attended off and on by Chinese and Vietnamese students.

Most of the Cambodian students had very limited education in Cambodia and in refugee camps in Thailand. Still, they had quite diverse educational backgrounds. Most were literate in Khmer, though some were not. Most of them knew the English alphabet and were familiar with reading and writing English words, though some were not. Some could carry on a basic conversation in English, but most could not. What struck me the most while teaching these students was the "educational" relationship between them and their children. Some of the parents occasionally brought their



children to class, and they were expected to both study and learn, and also to help their parents study and learn. This relationship sparked my interest in the research I conducted for this dissertation.

I saw two main potential outcomes from the research I wanted to pursue, one practical and one theoretical. Much home-school research has been used to guide the development of parental education programs. An understanding of the educational ways, needs, and strengths in both families and classrooms in the Cambodian community would be indispensable for creating a comprehensive parental education program. A 'family biliteracy' program could be developed around what was discovered about how parents contribute to their children's acquisition of Khmer and Khmer literacy, and how children can contribute to their parents' acquisition of English and English literacy. A second outcome I saw for the research would be its contributions to family literacy theory, theories of biliteracy/biculturalism in language-minority communities, and macro-sociolinguistic issues related to language diversity. There is not enough dialogue between educational researchers in these areas, and one goal of this research is to draw connections between the study of literacy use and development in homes, in schools, and in language-minority communities, relating those connections to the wider issue of language education in a diverse society.

## Chapter 2

### Literacy and language in minority communities

The issue of how the lives of minority communities (either ethnic or linguistic) are affected, controlled, or mediated by language has been addressed by various disciplines (linguistics, anthropology, social psychology, critical theory, and others). What all these strands of literature share is a commitment to investigating the mechanisms by which people come to understand one another. Much applied research in these disciplines is interested in the relevance of such mechanisms to structured educational processes. This chapter will review these issues and relate them specifically to language and literacy development within immigrant families. The following arguments will be supported:

- 1) "What literacy is" varies from context to context.
- 2) Not only do definitions of literacy vary from context to context, so do *approaches* to the development of literacy.
- 3) People should be viewed as *agents* in their sociolinguistic world, not subjects of it.
- 4) People's native languages play an important role in their development of new language and literacy competencies.
- 5) In families, children and adults enact approaches to literacy, and are agents in each other's development of literacy competencies. Family literacy

programs need to take into account more diverse and complex forms of family literacy practice.

6) Adult ESL programs should recognize the social world in which students live and draw from its 'fund of knowledge,' and productively utilize the native language resources of learners.

7) For immigrants, the experience of language and culture change is especially profound, and families are re-invented with new relations of power and knowledge. Schooling contributes to these profound changes.

### Theories of literacy

Goody and Watt's (1968) now classic paper on the consequences of literacy makes sharp distinctions between literate and oral cultures. The advent of literacy revolutionizes a society because "the alphabet makes it possible to write easily and read unambiguously about anything which the society can talk about" (39). Greek alphabetic literacy led to all "those cultural innovations of early Greece which are common to all alphabetically literate societies" (43). And indeed, lay the ground work for all 'Western thought.'

Regarding the cognitive benefits of literacy, "writing establishes a different kind of relationship between the word and its referent, a relationship that is more general and more abstract, and less closely connected with the particularities of person, place and time, than obtains in oral communication" (44). Goody and Watt seem to single out Asian cultures especially as intellectually lacking because of their non-alphabetic scripts: "Greece is therefore considerably closer to being a model for the world-wide intellectual tradition of the contemporary literate world than those earlier civilizations of the Orient" (55).

According to Goody and Watt, the literate person is in a sense not bound by culture: "in contrast to the homeostatic transmission of the cultural tradition among non-literate peoples, literate society leaves more to its members; less homogeneous in its cultural tradition, it gives more free play to the individual, and particularly to the intellectual, the literate specialist himself..." (63). Strangely, the opposite argument could be made as to the ability of literate societies to rigidly codify and transmit knowledge from one generation to the next (as in, say, a religious text), while the oral transmission of knowledge might allow for the change and re-interpretation of information and narrative over the years. Halverson (1991) is critical of Goody and Watt's (1968) as well as Olson's (1977) presumption of an inherent logic/autonomy to literacy, as ultimately, Halverson argues, "the bias of language...is determined by the purpose of the language act, not by the modality, spoken or written, of the language" (628-629).

More recently, in reaction to the 'great divide' literature of which Goody and Watt is representative, a number of researchers have attempted to isolate the actual effects literacy has on people's lives, and in so doing have called into question the notion that literacy is necessary for such things as higher-order thinking or economic mobility. Scribner and Cole's study of the Vai in Africa (1981) showed how many of the assumed cognitive consequences of literacy were in fact mostly a result of schooling, and not literacy per se (131-132). Also, in the US literacy does not in and of itself lead to economic success. Wiley (1993) points out that while it has been thought that becoming educated led to greater social mobility, the change tends to happen over a generation, not within an individual: "Children have tended to fare slightly better than their parents, but education has tended to follow - or co-occur with - mobility, rather than to precede it" (425). He claims real

social advances happen because of improved work situations rather than improved English language and literacy.

A new way of looking at literacy has emerged which shies away from either imbuing it with absolute benefits (cognitive or social) or reducing it to a neutral set of decoding skills. Street's (1984) distinction between 'autonomous' and 'ideological' models of literacy helps clarify the differences between competing views of literacy. The autonomous model is built upon a decontextualized view of literacy, seeing it as having an intrinsic nature which alters the society or individual who possesses it. In contrast, those who hold the ideological model of literacy "have come to view literacy practices as inextricably linked to cultural and power structures in society, and to recognize the variety of cultural practices associated with reading and writing in different contexts" (Street 1993: 7). The ideological view of literacy opens up the possibility of multiple literacies in people's lives, all of which are embedded in specific social scenes.

### Cultures of literacy development

One of the lessons that should be learned from the growing realization in literacy studies that there are many kinds of literacy, of which schooled-literacy is but one (cf. Cook-Gumperz, 1986: 22), is that there is a plurality of ways of *approaching* literacy, of what it *means* to read and write. There is no one standard of "meaningful" literacy or "authentic" reading and writing. What might be considered inauthentic literate activity in one cultural context could be seen as authentic by the participants in another cultural context. A similar argument can be made for considering a plurality of ways for approaching the *development* of literacy.

A good description of the value of a culture-specific "other" approach to literacy acquisition is offered in Wagner (1989). He describes learning to read and write in indigenous Quranic schools where there is an emphasis on "oral memorization..., correct (that is, accurate and aesthetic) oral recitation; training in the Arabic script; and strict authoritarian instruction" (9). Wagner argues such approaches to literacy acquisition are valid and useful in contexts where they are part of a culture's traditional approach to education.

Another description comes from Tambiah (1968), who conducted an ethnography of literacy in a village in Northeast Thailand. Tambiah reports that:

the primary qualification required of the traditional literate specialist in the village is that he be able to read; writing usually went with reading, but its chief use, if acquired well, was in copying. The emphasis was on calligraphic skill, not on creative composition. (94)

These literacy attitudes were played out in the type of learning that took place in the traditional temple school, which Tambiah shows involved reading aloud, memorization, and recitation (98-102).

None of these *particulars* of literacy education are being presented here as generalizable to the Cambodian situation described below, though traditional Thai schooling may be quite similar to traditional Cambodian schooling. My point is to demonstrate that there are indeed multiple standards for what it means to be literate and for the proper route towards the development of literacy. Different cultures have different approaches to the development of reading and writing. These approaches are not static, but constantly changing. Wolcott's (1991:267) notion of 'propriospects,' "networks of sense-making connections created and constantly being reformulated by



each of us out of direct experience," captures how I view these approaches evolving in immigrant families over time.

### **Literacy, language maintenance, and language change**

Fishman and Hoffman (1966) analyze census data from 1910 through 1960 to determine the extent to which second and third generations in the US maintain the mother tongues of their parents and grandparents. Typically, there is a tremendous drop in the third generation of the number of mother tongue speakers of a language. The only exceptions to this rule are where there is a large enough concentration of speakers in a given area, combined with continual immigration (e.g., Mexicans in the US) or a rigid separatism and fixed domains of mother tongue use (e.g., the Amish). The case of Cambodian immigration appears to fit none of these conditions - they are widely dispersed throughout the US, immigration has nearly ceased, while domains of use of Khmer are fading.

Fishman (1989) suggests that the maintenance of mother tongues intergenerationally is a function of the type of diglossia that exists:

In its most general terms, diglossia both represents and requires the maintenance of *intercultural* and *intracultural* boundaries. Whereas the latter may not be possible without some degree of the former, the former alone is not sufficient for intergenerational mother tongue continuity. (226)

That is, *intracultural* boundaries are most necessary for mother tongue maintenance. These boundaries take the form of stable domains of language use within a community. According to Fishman (1967, 1980), if these domains are stable (that is, a situation of diglossia), language maintenance is encouraged.

In contrast (though not necessarily in conflict) with Fishman's view of language change as dependent on macro-sociolinguistic structures, in what could be termed a 'top down' perspective on the causes of language choice in any given situation, Gal (1978) takes a bottom-up perspective, looking at how individuals' strategic language choices in certain situations are contributing to language change. In a context of stable bilingualism, "Sex-linked differences in language choice have influenced the over-all community-wide process of change" (Gal, 1978: 2). Gal argues that the way that people speak is caused by "strategic and socially meaningful linguistic choices which systematically link language change to social change" (2), that is, that language change is related to speakers' relationships with change in society. For example, young women express preferences for new social identity by choosing a language symbolizing a new social status. Their creative use of language in this community is a product of increased participation in social change. (Gal, 1978: 14-15). This perspective on the relationship between language change and maintenance could be termed 'bottom up,' as individuals are seen as agents of language choice rather than passive subjects reacting to a linguistic domain of use.

Tollefson (1993) argues for an opposing view of language choice, that people's learning of a second language is not a strategic act of redefining one's identity. As he puts it, "second language learning is not a solution to exclusivity, privilege, and domination, but rather a mechanism for them" (1993: 210). That is, the fact that immigrants in the US find themselves having to learn English is a result of their oppression, not of their efforts at emancipation. Learning English is not an example of immigrants' involvement in social change, but an affirmation of the status quo.

Street (1993), in reviewing recent trends in literacy studies, concludes that "Research in cultures that have newly acquired reading and writing draws our attention to the creative and original ways in which people transform literacy to their own cultural concerns and interests" (1). And further, the study of 'vernacular' literacies can shed light on "the richness and diversity of literacy practices and meanings despite the pressures for uniformity exerted by the nation state and modern education systems" (1).

Street's perspective has similarities with Gal's in seeing individuals as change agents, rather than more powerless reactors to factors beyond their control (that is, we choose a language to speak based on a society-defined domain of use), which is the situation described by both Fishman and Tollefson. The work presented in this dissertation will be more in line with that of Gal and Street, in that the members of this community of learners are seen as purposeful change agents, partly struggling to redefine their identity in a new world, and partly struggling to achieve a level of independence from the norms of the American nation state.

| Domain \ Perspective     | Perspective |           |
|--------------------------|-------------|-----------|
|                          | Top down    | Bottom up |
| Language Use             | Fishman     | Gal       |
| Societal Power Relations | Tollefson   | Street    |

**Figure 2.1:** *Causes of language choice and language change*

### **The function of native languages in literacy development**

Before we can read the word, we read the world (Freire, 1987: 35). This basic fact of literate development exemplifies what I believe is the additive nature of all competency development, how all new understandings are built on old understandings. This guiding principle is especially relevant to the learning of new languages and literacies. When we do not at least recognize students' first language competencies (oral and literate), a tremendous resource is going to waste. Wiley (1993: 425-426) claims that "by failing to assess and build upon a student's L1 and native cultural resources, the student's instructional identity and status is defined entirely on the basis of the English language and English literacy." And along with the evident methodological reasons for building on students' L1 competencies, "Maintenance of the native language within the family provides an intergenerational bridge between elders and children."

Weinstein-Shr (1993: 524) argues that to make effective use of the linguistic resources that students bring to the classroom, certain needs must be addressed at the programmatic and policy level. Governmental institutions should be pushed to help with the creation and dissemination of a knowledge base on "the language and literacy resources of language minority residents." She urges teachers and researchers to seek to understand the function of first language literacies and how such resources can be utilized instead of destroyed.

The field of biliteracy is rapidly growing, with the recent publication of books such as David Spener's (1994) Adult Biliteracy in the United States, Sandra Lee McKay's (1993) Agendas for Second Language Literacy, Crandall and Peyton's (1993) Approaches to Adult ESL Literacy Instruction, and Wrigley and Guth's (1992) Bringing Literacy to Life: Issues and Options in

Adult ESL Literacy. These books and the papers in them share a concern with the recognition and utilization of multiple literacies as educational resources. They view the relationship between language and literacy competencies as mutually beneficial.

One framework which attempts to inclusively portray the complex and interdependent relationships between literacy and bilingualism is Hornberger's (1989) continua of biliteracy contexts, media, and development. This framework describes biliteracy as situated within a network of nested continua related to context (micro-macro, oral-literate, monolingual-bilingual), media (similar-dissimilar linguistic structures, convergent-divergent scripts, simultaneous-successive exposure) and development (first language-second language transfer, reception-production, oral language-written language). All the continua are relevant to understanding a particular instance of biliteracy.

Related to the interdependent relationship existing between literacy and bilingualism which Hornberger (1989) discusses, I often refer to an individual's 'complex of biliteracy competencies,' by which I mean something similar to the sociolinguistic concept of 'speech repertoire' - "the range of linguistic varieties which the speaker has at his disposal and which he may appropriately use as a member of his speech community" (Platt and Platt, 1975: 35). However, *speech repertoire's* paradigmatic orientation doesn't connote the matrix-like, interdependent relationship I see existing between the various biliteracy competencies, nor does it suggest the inclusion of literate as well as oral competencies.

Language policies should also respond to the evidence for the value of utilizing native languages as resources. Ruíz' (1984) distinction between 'language-as-right' and 'language-as-resource' orientations to language



planning, and Kloss' (1977) distinction between language tolerance and language promotion are effective ways of framing language policy which recognize the utilitarian benefit of being a language-rich nation. Arguments for a language-as-resource/language promotion orientation are strengthened by continued research into the ways in which multiple language and literacy competencies are mutually beneficial.

### Family literacy

Approaches to the acquisition of literacy are acted out in families as well as in schools. But variable family approaches to teaching and learning all too often become seen as "good" and "bad" family literacy practices. Arguing against this position, Laosa (1983: 339) reports that parents from the Mexican-American community are not any worse at teaching their children than Anglo parents, but they teach *differently*. Laosa (1982: 798) argues that schools do not use the same interactional-learning patterns used in the Mexican-American families he studied. Mexican-American parents who have not had much schooling use more modeling and less praise and inquiry (compared with Anglos) when interacting with their children at home. Both sets of parents may be living up to their image of appropriate teacher behavior, but the Anglo parents are closer to actual teacher behavior in schools serving both Anglo and Mexican-American children.

Similarly, Heath (1983) describes the family literacy practices she observed in two different communities of the Piedmont Carolinas. Her intent was to examine the relationship between success in school and the cultural/socio-linguistic background of children. Specifically, she was interested in why the African-American children performed differently from the white children of a similar economic background. In the two



communities she discovered two styles of questioning and two ways of perceiving children as information-givers. Children in the "mainstream" homes were being socialized for the types of known-answer questioning routines that went on in the schools.

Moll et al (1989) discuss the notion of 'funds of knowledge' which families possess and which they utilize to strategically maintain their household's success (8). They examine how "specific household activities make use of these funds of knowledge, i.e., the domains within which they are organized and transmitted" (10). In the Latino community they were investigating, they discovered that "knowledge is *obtained* by the children, not imposed by the adults" (11). They sought to apply what they discovered about the ways families used their funds of knowledge, and how the funds were manifest in certain types of activities, to developing new pedagogies in schools.

Moll and Greenberg (1990) attempt to apply a Vygotskyian theoretical perspective on the types of transmission of knowledge that goes on in households to the development of educational programs in a working-class Latino community:

...there are various household zones of proximal development, manifested in different ways depending on the social history of the family and the purpose and goal of the activity. These zones are clearly content- or knowledge-based and rarely trivial. They usually matter; that is, they are authentic. (326)

They argue that by reproducing in schools such authentic activities, the "funds of knowledge" of families can be built on.

Taylor (1993) is critical of 'mainstream' literature on the topic of family literacy, which she sees as overly-obsessed with deficit views of the

communities for whom family literacy programs are typically directed. She singles out the largest federally-funded institution working on family literacy: "If one deconstructs the rhetoric of the National Center for Family Literacy, one would think that the 'problems promulgated' are caused by the people themselves, that it is their fault that they are poor and their children 'undereducated'" (550-551). She goes on to say that family literacy has been used by some "to reify deficit-driven views of families" who are poor or who are learning English as a second language.

Regarding what types of research are needed, Taylor (1993) calls for a deeper understanding of the lives of families "so that together we can build meaningful connections between everyday learning and school learning." Drawing on the work of Moll et al (1989), she argues that researchers need to understand the 'emic' perspective within families of "the extraordinary funds of knowledge that they bring to any learning situation" (551-552).

Teale and Sulzby (1986) review the history of attention to the early (before age 5 or 6) years of children's learning to read and write, centered around the concept of 'reading readiness.' The paradigm shift from 'reading readiness' to 'emergent literacy' involves "regarding children as *active participants* in learning-hypothesis generators and problem solvers - rather than as passive recipients of information" (xv, emphasis added) and recognizing the developmental importance of children's early exposure to environmental print. The post-reading readiness literature has come to the following conclusions (Teale and Sulzby, 1986: xvii):

- Literacy development begins long before children start formal instruction.
- Literacy develops in real-life settings for real-life activities in order to "get things done."

- Children learn written language through active engagement with their world.
- Although children's learning about literacy can be described in terms of generalized stages, children can pass through these stages in a variety of ways and at different ages.

The term *emergent* implies both continuity and discontinuity (xx). According to Teale and Sulzby (1986), the use of the word 'emergent' accentuates the fact that children learn in an evolving fashion, "changing and refining their motives and strategies and even developing new ones" (xx), while their learning process balances both assimilation and accommodation.

### Adult ESL literacy programs

A seminal paper in the field of adult literacy is Fingeret (1983), in which she argues that "adult basic educators continue to define their student populations in terms of incompetence, inability, and illiteracy, even though this kind of orientation has been labeled a 'deficit' perspective and is under attack in a variety of social science disciplines" (133). This was said ten years ago, and little has changed. Fingeret's paper accurately states the predominant point of view of many in ABE of adults whose literacy skills are not deemed adequate to make them productive members of society.

What adult basic educators need is to "understand illiterate adults in their social world" (Fingeret, 1983: 133). Fingeret argues that adult learners don't associate a lack of power with their inability to read and write according to society's standards, but see literacy as merely one of "many instrumental skill and knowledge resources that, combined, are required for daily life." People live in a social network that allows them to get by without perfecting all such skills. "Therefore, many illiterate adults see themselves as

interdependent; they contribute a range of skills and knowledge other than reading and writing to their networks" (Fingeret, 1983: 133-134).

Ten years later, I might not make such liberal use of the term 'illiterate adult,' and look at how 'a range of skills and knowledge' may include different kinds of literacies which some ABE professionals still do not see as valid (that is, literacies which are not seen as contributing to US economic development) and therefore count as illiterate. Especially in the world of the non-English speaking refugee, there is not a clear distinction between readers and non-readers. There are many different *kinds* of readers. As Fingeret states, "Illiterate adults manifest a range of abilities to decode the social world and to take intentional action in that world" (Fingeret, 1983: 145). Such decoding can be viewed as a type of literacy.

Klassen and Burnaby (1993) use quantitative and qualitative methods to examine immigrant adults learning English in Canada. They discuss immigrants' strategies for understanding, claiming that the learners have various ways of addressing their literacy needs. For example, they rely on friends and family for aid in certain situations involving first or second language literacy (384). Klassen and Burnaby argue that these immigrants are being ill-served by their adult ESL classes. Mostly, the classes help learners (especially women) by widening their social network. (286) One of the reasons the students are ill-served is the lack of utilization of their first languages in the classroom.

Many adult education programs have been designed to address the needs of parents in minority-language communities. Research on home educational practices has been linked to the development of such programs. The parental education program Delgado-Gaitan (1987: 27-29) describes for Mexican-American parents in California, Freirean in conception, does *not*

work from the position that there is something wrong with the attitudes or behaviors of parents. Instead, something is wrong with the socio-economic circumstances that have led to low parental literacy. Therefore, the goal of the program in adult literacy is to "empower" the parents to participate in their children's education, without imposing a standard of proper parenting behavior.

Auerbach (1989) describes a similar English family literacy program in Boston for refugees and immigrants. Auerbach universalizes the refugee and immigrant experience in economic and social terms. She asks, "How can we draw on parents' knowledge and experience to inform instruction?" (pg. 177) and calls for participatory curriculum development. The program she outlines uses reading and writing to (among other things) "model whole-language activities that parents might do with children" (pg. 178).

A caveat regarding this approach is that even though it explicitly claims to be 'anti-deficit' and sensitive to indigenous family literacy practices, in the end educators need to be careful not to erase cross-cultural variation in literacy acquisition practices and by pressing upon parents a norm of proper literacy activities (i.e., whole-language). As with family literacy programs, the best adult ESL programs recognize the social world in which students live and draw from its 'fund of knowledge,' while productively utilizing the native language resources of learners.

### **The Southeast Asian refugee experience**

An increasing amount of attention is being given to the educational experience of Southeast Asian refugees in the U.S., particularly to the Hmong and the Cambodians. Trueba et al. (1990) have given attention to the educational experience of the Hmong in America. The use of literacy in



Southeast Asian communities has received attention in the work of Gail Weinstein-Shr (1986, 1991). In 1986 she worked in the Hmong community studying the functions and uses of literacy. Recently (1991), she has set out to describe what literacy is used for in the Cambodian community, and posits three research questions for the ethnographically inclined educational researcher:

- 1) How do refugees, immigrants ... solve or fail to solve problems that require literacy skills?
- 2) What are the functions and uses of literacy... in the lives of people that are served? Who uses what language to whom and under what circumstances? What are the consequences of this particular communicative economy?
- 3) What is the significance of language in the negotiation of new roles and relationships in a new setting? How has authority and power shifted in families... What are the ways in which schools influence the process in which these relationships are negotiated? (pg. 6).

While Weinstein-Shr is asking questions about the *use* of literacy and attitudes toward literacy in communities like a Cambodian community, another ethnographic researcher, Smith-Hefner (1990), is more interested in general attitudes toward teaching, learning, and parenting in a Cambodian community. She concludes at one point that "whereas parents repeatedly stressed that teachers are responsible for all aspects of teaching, they also emphasized that ultimate responsibility for *learning* lies with the student" (pg. 260). This finding has important implications for what sort of education Cambodian parents would expect both for their children and for themselves, and for what sort of behavior is expected of teachers, students, and children when interacting during activities related to literacy development.



These expectations may run counter to the educational reality Cambodians face in the U.S. educational system. This possibility, specifically regarding literacy education, is a fundamental motivation for this research. I am seeking to determine both the extent to which the gap between expectation and reality exists, and the quality of this gap.

In the field of education, anthropological research has long been concerned with the issue of cultural continuity/discontinuity between schools and homes (cf. articles by Jacob and Jordan, Erickson, and others in the special issue of The Anthropology of Education Quarterly, 1987). As the argument runs, if a "classroom culture" is different from the "home culture" of the students, such a discontinuity will lead to poor performance by the student. A problem with this argument is that it constructs a reductionist image of culture as static and undifferentiated, what Street (1991) calls the reification, naturalization, and nominalization of culture, which "hides its essentially processual and changing character" (4). Problematizing the home-school discontinuity postulate involves a consideration of how people in a community can have multiple ways of making meaning, multiple ways of sharing knowledge, and multiple ways of reinventing their world. In my research, this is done by plotting a new relationship between homes and classrooms, based on the multiple ways in which members of a community participate in literacy activity.

### **Operational definitions**

Throughout the following chapters, a number of terms will be used which are somewhat controversial, and so working definitions need to be set forward.

### **Literacy**

Because of its multi-faceted nature (discussed at the beginning of this chapter), literacy is difficult if not impossible to operationalize. One benefit of the ethnographic method is that I can generally rely on 'emic' definitions of literacy. That is, whatever community members think literacy is, it is.

However, there are of course limits to this convenience, times when I must choose to call something 'literacy,' and have a valid reason for doing so. For the purposes of description, I am calling any act of reading and writing an example of literacy. That is not to say that literacy is 'just' reading and writing. Those terms have their own highly complex definitions. For example, one can open up the definition of writing to include all marks made which have meaning to the maker, which can be interpreted. This means the drawings of children can be viewed as a kind of writing, as I view them in later chapters.

One of the few examples where a literacy theorist has actually gone out on a limb to clearly define what 'literacy' means is Gee (1989). He defines it as the use of language in "secondary discourses" (23). These are the discourses learned in institutions 'beyond the family (school, work, etc.). The risk of defining literacy so absolutely is that it is easy to criticize. The problem I have with Gee's definition is that it would label certain activities as literacy which I would not, such as telling the teacher the days of the week (use of language in the secondary discourse of the school), while at the same time excluding some activities that I *would* call literacy, such as drawing at home by young children (a primary discourse).

### **Competency**

Hymes (1972b) asserts that speakers of a language do not only possess grammatical knowledge of a language, but "he or she acquires competence as

to when to speak, when not, and as to what to talk about with whom, when, where, in what manner" (277). Competence can be seen in absolutist terms, something a speaker either has or doesn't have, but I prefer to set it in a continuum where a speaker has different types of competence in a given language variety. I feel the term 'competency' may connote this continuous aspect better than 'competence,' and so I often choose to use it. In multilingual situations such as West Philadelphia, people can have some sort of competency in more than one language and I use 'competencies' to refer to these.

### Speech community

The notion of 'speech community' has been especially problematic for many sociolinguists, which is one reason I try to avoid the phrase and instead refer simply to a 'community of learners.' The term was used widely in the early 1970s in the work of Labov and Hymes. Labov (1972: 120-121) argues that "the speech community is not defined by any marked agreement in the use of language elements, so much as by participation in a set of shared norms." As he sees it, "a speech community cannot be conceived as a group of speakers who all use the same forms; it is best defined as a group who share the same norms in regard to language" (158). Hymes (1972a) defines speech community as "a community sharing rules for the conduct and interpretation of speech, and rules for the interpretation of at least one linguistic variety. Both conditions are necessary" (54).

However, there are definitional problems with speech community with how its boundaries are defined and the issue of circularity. Responding to Hymes' and Labov's definitions, Wolfson (1989) discusses these problems: "what is at issue in the definition of speech community is that not all

speakers of a language do share the same rules of speaking, and, therefore, not all may be said to belong to the same speech community" (50). That is definitely the case with the community I have been investigating, which while all from Cambodia and sharing some rules of speech, are not linguistically uniform.

Methodologically, it is next to impossible to isolate the boundaries of a speech group by looking only at language use. Wolfson posits the circularity problem:

If our concern is to describe rules of speaking which obtain across subgroups and which have a wide enough frame of reference to be useful to the language learner, we are faced with an inescapable circularity in the definition of our object of study. That is, a speech community is defined as a group that shares rules for the conduct and interpretation of speech, but there is no feature external to speech which can be used as a criterion of membership. (1989: 51)

Using a feature external to speech, rather than trying to trace the unconscious shared rules, would be an easier way of defining and isolating a community to study with respect to speech. To minimize circularity, Saville-Troike (1982) advises ethnographers of communication "should begin with an extra-linguistically defined social entity, and investigate its communicative repertoire in terms of the socially defined community" (19). Rather than try to linguistically isolate *the* community of Khmer speakers in West Philadelphia, I instead chose the social entity of an adult ESL class, in which I knew there were members of a community who shared a common history, grew up in the same country, and shared at least one language variety (Khmer). I do not pretend that this group is linguistically uniform or a 'complete' speech community.

### Literacy event

Heath (1978) defines literacy events as times when "written materials are integral to the nature of participants' interactions and their interpretive processes" (35). It is analogous to the older sociolinguistic notion of speech event. Analogous to (perhaps a subset of) Hymes' (1972a) notion of the speech event, a literacy event is a bounded social phenomenon contingent upon the presence or creation of some text. The temporal boundaries of such an event can be a little unclear, but can usually be resolved through examining the understandings of participants in the event.

Street (1993) is mildly critical of the notion of literacy event as Heath defines it. He prefers 'literacy practices' as a broader concept, which is "pitched at a higher level of abstraction referring to both behavior and conceptualizations related to the use of reading and/or writing" (12). I prefer 'literacy event' *because* of its boundedness, its observability. It is not in-and-of-itself an overly static notion, as a higher level of abstraction can be brought to bear on an event's interpretation, linking the behavior of participants to their conceptualizations, and linking the event to wider social processes. Certainly, one can never know all there is to know about a literacy event simply by observing it - it is not an autonomous unit which is interpretable outside its social/cultural/political context. But by systematic analysis of it within the context of other collected data on language and literacy uses and attitudes within a community, research on literacy events can speak to a 'higher level of abstraction.'

## Chapter Three

### The ethnography of literacy

My understanding of the nature of literacy and biliteracy, as outlined in the preceding chapter, my understanding of learning in minority language communities, and my research questions all point toward conducting ethnographic research. I am using ethnography because it is a particularly appropriate tool for finding answers to the questions I am asking. In this chapter I will outline my approach to the ethnography of literacy in language minority communities, and show how my research questions and research plan match up with this approach.

#### Ethnography in general

Agar (1986) describes the work of ethnographers as follows:

Ethnographers set out to show how social action in one world makes sense from the point of view of another. Such work requires an intensive personal involvement, an abandonment of traditional scientific control, an improvisational style to meet situations not of the researcher's making, and the ability to learn from a long series of mistakes (12).

One should bear in mind, though, that "abandonment of traditional scientific control" does not mean an abandonment of *science*, and "improvisational style" should not imply a lack of rigor of approach in fieldwork. True, ethnography does not test theory in the tradition of the experimental method, but as Hammersley and Atkinson (1983) put it, "The value of ethnography is perhaps most obvious in relation to the *development* of theory" (23).



Hammersley and Atkinson (1983) emphasize the importance of the 'reflexive' character of ethnographic research, meaning that researchers must become part of the social world they study: "The ethnographer participates, overtly or covertly, in people's daily lives for an extended period of time, watching what happens, listening to what is said, asking questions" (2). That is, ethnographic researchers gather any data relevant to the questions they are asking.

More specifically, Erickson (1990) argues that ethnographic fieldwork is good at answering the following questions:

1. What is happening, specifically, in social action that takes place in this particular setting?
2. What do these actions mean to the actors involved in them, at the moment the actions took place?
3. How are the happenings organized in patterns of social organization and learned cultural principles for the conduct of everyday life...?
4. How is what is happening in this setting as a whole ... related to happenings at other system levels outside and inside the setting?
5. How do the ways everyday life in this setting is organized compare with other ways of organizing social life in a wide range of settings in other places and at other times? (82-83).

These are the types of questions I am asking (see chapter one). My first and third descriptive research questions and my comparative questions, finding out what literacy development and language use look like in a certain community, are 'what is happening' type questions. My second question on language and literacy attitudes aims at discovering 'what these actions mean to the actors involved.' My interpretive questions, especially my final one linking micro- and macro-sociolinguistic issues, are analogous to the question

Erickson is asking above on how local happenings are related to happenings at other 'system levels.'

I wish at the outset to avoid overly absolutist descriptions of 'the way things are.' Street (1991) declares, "Culture is a verb." It is not a thing, but a process by which people make meanings and define and redefine their world. Overly reifying or taming culture leads to a monolithic image of a system in which there are no conflicts, no unknowns, and no possibility for change. Street wonders:

how is change possible in such an account which appears to define a closed system of 'shared meaningful ideas' as though the question of an 'authentic culture' were a matter for anthropological discovery rather than of contested discourses within a particular region. (3)

I will try to avoid such an account by being aware of ranges in behavior and attitudes, conflicting interests and agendas.

### **Ethnography of literacy**

Basso (1974) is one of the earliest attempts to explicitly promote ethnography as a method of conducting research on writing. His argument is based on his definition of writing as a form of communication, a kind of communicative activity. The purpose of ethnography is "the analysis of the structure and function of this activity in a broad range of human societies" (426). Basso argues that researchers should take into account the fact that writing is not the only channel of communication in a community, so that its selection must be seen in the context of other possible channels of communication available to members of that community. (426)

Through his reference to channels, Basso is situating what he calls the "ethnography of writing" within Hymes' (1972a) framework for describing

communicative events, which includes the following elements: 1) message form, 2) message content, 3) setting, 4) scene, 5) speaker, 6) addressor, 7) hearer, 8) addressee, 9) purposes-outcomes, 10) purposes-goals, 11) key, 12) channels, 13) forms of speech, 14) norms of interaction, 15) norms of interpretation, and 16) genres. "Channels" refers to whether the event is oral, written, semaphore, etc. By including the written within his framework for describing communicative events, Hymes paved the way for future ethnographies of writing and literacy.

Heath (1983, 1978) sees writing as integral to questions of schooling and socialization. Heath (1978) is interested in the question of "how and in what ways school communicative skills, written and spoken, are solicited, reinforced, contradicted, and refused in community settings" (4). She focuses on researching literacy events: "Beyond having an appropriate structure, a literacy event has certain interaction rules and demands particular interpretive competencies on the part of participants" (35). She encourages looking at "language acquisition settings which include all members of the network interacting with young children" (38).

Szwed (1981) reiterates the importance of literacy as a socially constructed activity, suggesting that rather than look just at instructional issues, researchers should concentrate on "the *social meaning of literacy*: that is, the roles these abilities play in social life" (14), meaning the kinds of literacy available for selection, and the contexts and manner in which they are used "by ordinary people in ordinary activities" (14). Szwed proposes that definitions of reading and writing have to include "social context" and "function" (15). Operating from such definitions and using ethnographic methods, one would discover "not a single-level of literacy, on a single

continuum from reader to non-reader, but a variety of *configurations* of literacy, a *plurality of literacies*" (16).

Again commenting on the necessity of linking literacy in school with "literacies" outside of school, is Erickson (1984). He argues that "the notion of literacy, as knowledge and skill taught and learned in school, is not separable from the concrete circumstances of its uses inside and outside school." (525) Differing literacies are embedded in differing belief systems.

As to the relevance of ethnography to the study of literacy, Gillespie (1993) believes that ethnographic research has helped expand the knowledge base on literacy learners by investigating "the functions and uses of literacy in the everyday lives of various social groups" (529). She argues that "Qualitative approaches to literacy and second language acquisition research have much to offer researchers in ESL literacy, where complex and multiple features of language, culture, and social context interact" (531). 'Traditional' methods of collecting data miss out on discovering "ways of knowing" which are available to ethnographic researchers who immerse themselves in the lives of learners. (531)

### **Ethnography of literacy in language-minority communities**

Literacy, especially English language literacy, is part of a more complex socio-cultural matrix in communities which are or are becoming bicultural/bilingual. Gee (1990), referring to Scollon and Scollon's (1981) study of literacy in an Athabaskan community, concludes that "Language and literacy acquisition are forms of socialization, in this case socialization into mainstream ways of using language in speech and print, mainstream ways of taking meaning, and of making sense of experience" (67). So if the acquisition of literacy in bilingual communities is a form of socialization, one needs a

fairly inclusive methodological scope when looking at any instance of literacy or biliteracy. Hornberger (1989, 1990) puts forth such a framework for the ethnographic examination of literacy and biliteracy in bilingual communities, as noted in chapter two. She posits a series of "intersecting and nested continua" to show the many complex relationships between literacy and bilingualism.

A complementary theoretical and methodological approach to literacy in bilingual communities can be found in the work of Moll et al. (1989). They have been involved in a long-term ethnographic project in a southwestern United States Mexican community "designed to facilitate both the analysis of household resources and the application of these resources in classrooms through the development of novel literacy instructional practices" (Moll et al. 1989: 3). As mentioned in chapter two, they base much of their work on the notion of "funds of knowledge," information and strategies which communities have access to in order to maintain their well being (Moll et al, 1989: 8).

One particular 'fund of knowledge' which Moll et al. look at, and which this proposal is interested in, is a bilingual community's knowledge of, use of and approach to literacy. Moll et al. analyze the ways in which these funds of knowledge are drawn on in homes, "the domains within which they are organized and transmitted" (9-10). They discovered specific 'household pedagogies' which could only be understood in context of the social history of families (9-10).

Weinstein-Shr (1993) discusses a research agenda for adult ESL literacy, arguing that research needs to "grow beyond the confines of the classroom" (522). There is a need to discover the ways in which learners cope with daily literacy concerns using whatever resources are at their disposal. For research



to be applicable to the classroom, "it becomes necessary to investigate how people use literacy, in which language, and for what purposes" (522).

Finally, there is an argument that the ethnography of literacy in language minority communities can inform the political situation such groups face. Wiley (1993), when discussing educational policy issues relevant to biliteracy, emphasizes the need for ethnography as a tool for developing language policy (421). Ethnography is useful because, "the individual experiences of language minorities, as they attempt to acquire literacy and a second language, can also be understood within the context of struggles between groups with unequal power and resources" (421-422).

Hymes (1972), Basso (1974), Heath (1983, 1978), Szwed (1981), Erickson (1984), Hornberger (1989, 1990), Moll et al. (1989), Gee (1990), Gillespie (1993), and Weinstein-Shr (1993) all recognize the necessity of conducting research on literacy as it is embedded in social contexts. The acquisition of literacy is a social and cultural process, observable and interpretable only to a participant in the "communicative economy" (Hymes 1974: 4) of reading and writing in a given social network.

My descriptive and comparative research questions all view literacy in this way, repeatedly focusing on what people are doing with and around literacy. So in order to understand the social world which provides the context for the use and acquisition of literacy and biliteracy, I as researcher must immerse myself "reflexively" in the daily life of the Cambodian community. Using ethnography to understand both what is happening and what those happenings mean within a social context to the participants involved, is the most appropriate way for me to find answers to those questions.



### The path of my research

The progress of my own research was inspired by much of what has been described above, in terms of my attention to long-term reflexive involvement in the lives of community members. One aspect of my research that is not mentioned in the above description of ethnography is how I moved from being an outside observer to a full participant in the sites in which I worked. Below I present the method I followed for entering this community, how I collected data, and how I became involved as an active member in both the community center where the adult ESL classes took place, and in the home lives of the students I met there.

A few years ago, as part of a larger research project on biliteracy in Philadelphia, I had the responsibility of making some connections in the Cambodian community. I knew of a Southeast Asian community association (SACA) through a friend who taught ESL for them. I called them to offer my services as a volunteer teacher in return for permission to observe a class, and they asked me to come in one afternoon a week to teach a class. There was a Cambodian woman who taught an ESL class four days a week, for whom I substituted once a week for the remainder of the academic year.

The following fall I got in touch with SACA to teach and observe a class again. I had a meeting with the director of SACA, and I tried to explain the research I was doing and why I was interested in the class. However, there wasn't going to be any class because there was no more teacher. As I needed an observation site, I told the director that I and a few other university students could volunteer enough time to keep an afternoon class going on weekdays. We taught that class for the rest of that year. In the middle of that first year, SACA hired a Cambodian man, Hoeun, who grew up in Vietnam

to teach a separate beginning ESL section. The following two years I taught the class by myself.

At the beginning of one summer, after the first year of ESL classes I taught was over, I made arrangements with a Cambodian woman from my class, Bopha, to visit her home a couple of times a week over the summer so that we could exchange tutoring in English and Khmer. In both cases, with this student and with SACA, I felt I was both offering and asking for something, trying to create a situation 'fair' to both SACA and myself, as Erickson (1990) advises: "Careful negotiation of entry that enables research access under conditions that are fair both to the research subjects and to the researcher establishes the grounds for building rapport and trust" (141). I tried to follow that advice throughout my negotiation of entry into peoples' homes and lives.

After a second year of teaching at SACA, I began interviewing students, a program administrator, another teacher, and eventually some students' children. I spent a summer as a participant-observer in a summer program for children run by SACA, which was attended by many of my students' children. A year later I chose a cohort of four families which I began visiting once a week for couple hours. I also observed Southeast Asian children in the local public library.

Step by step, I went from acting as an outsider, with little vested interest in the goings on at SACA, to being intimately involved with program and staff development, and eventually helping them write a proposal for an experimental family literacy project based on tentative findings of my research (see chapter eight for a description of this proposal). Regarding my relationship with students, I went from feeling like a nervous invader of peoples' homes to being a regular once-a-week afternoon and dinner guest at

one student's apartment, now many months after I stopped collecting data. I helped her and her husband move into and renovate a new home. I sold her my old computer and continue to help her children use it. I feel that my reflexive immersion in this community of learners has led inevitably to acting as a responsible member, contributing where possible to the maintenance and promotion of each family's "fund of knowledge."

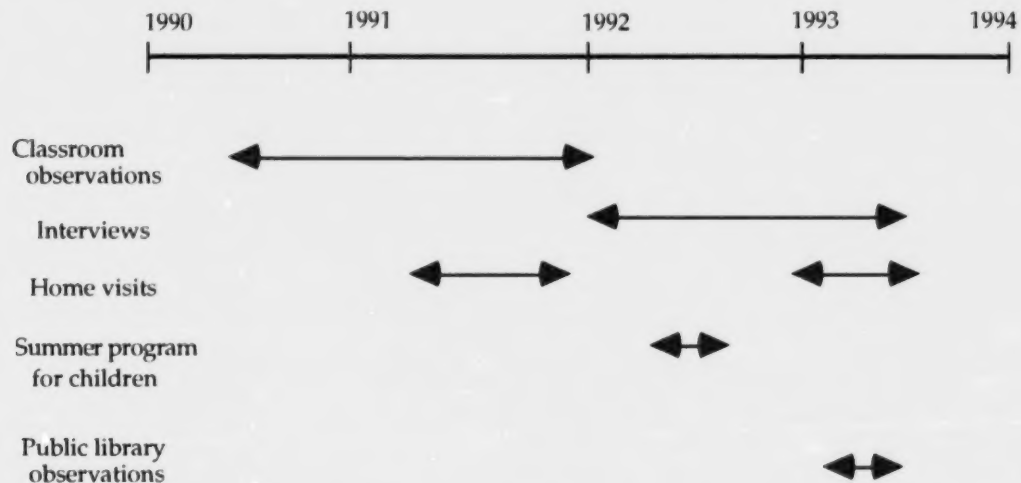


**Figure 3.1:** *Timeline of data collection activities*

### Looking for answers to the research questions

In this section I will describe how I went about looking for answers to the research questions listed in chapter one. Figure 3.2 below indicates the relationship between my descriptive research questions and the data sources I relied on to answer them. The figure is followed by a discussion of how I operationalized the research questions for each data-collection phase, and how I collected the data.

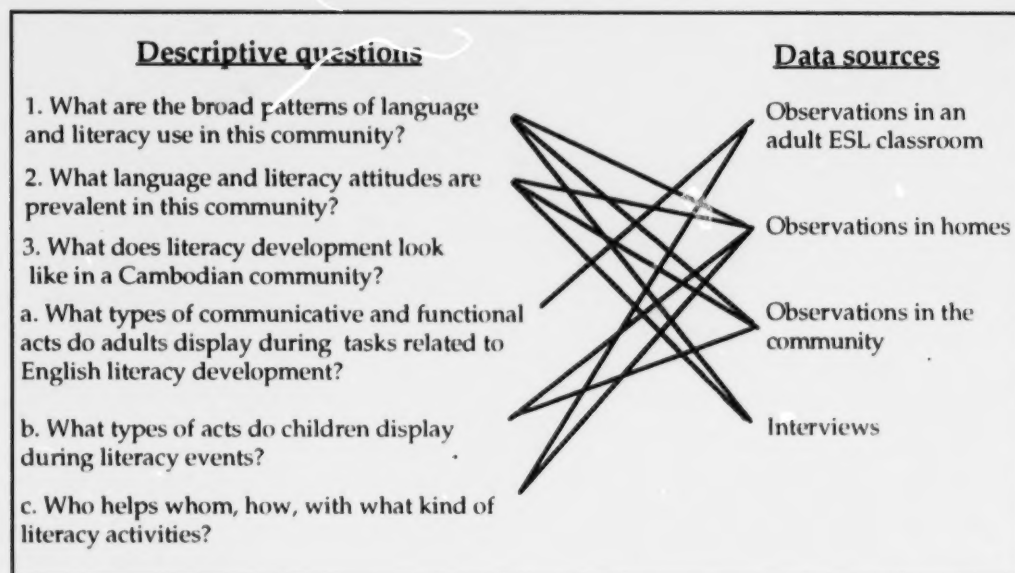


**Figure 3.2:** *Relationship between research questions and data sources*

### **In the adult ESL classroom**

ESL instruction for Cambodian adults was started about six years ago by the Southeast Asian Community Association (SACA). SACA is made up of Cambodian, Chinese, Hmong, Lao, and Vietnamese associations. The ESL program is a part of SACA's program in Adult Basic Education. The director of SACA sees its primary goal as basic or "survival" English skills, reading the gas bill, reading street signs, etc. And because the students are almost all mothers of school-age children, the director sees it as important for them to be able to communicate with their children's teachers (interview, director of SACA, 7.27.90). The ESL classes met five days a week for two hours in the afternoon. The location of the classes was a room rented from a Chinese association in the basement of a row house.

I started up the classes in the fall of 1990 as a continuation of classes I had observed the year before, in order to maintain on-going contact with

adult education in the Cambodian community<sup>1</sup>. The students who came were familiar with me from work I had done with them the year before. The class consisted of 4 to 8 Khmer women who had started a beginning ESL course the year before. Their abilities varied greatly from student to student and from skill area to skill area. They often brought their children, who played in or outside the classroom. We sat around a large table and worked through textbooks of my choosing.

One class was almost entirely Khmer-literate, and about half the students in the other class taught by Hoeun were Khmer-literate. Hoeun was ethnolinguistically Khmer (though he was born in southern Vietnam), biliterate and bilingual in Khmer and English, while I am a mostly monolingual-monoliterate English-speaking American. These differences of language, literacy, and culture, affected the type of collaborative/helping structures in the two classrooms.

I look at the classrooms as communities in which the participants (student/parents, teachers, students' children) have diverse complexes of biliteracy competencies. Some of these competencies are shared between participants, which is what allows communication to take place in the classroom; other competencies are not, and indeed some of these latter are the object of the students' learning. By looking at how participants collaborate/help each other to accomplish classroom literacy tasks, I am seeing these complexes at work.

Certain competencies (spoken English, written Khmer, etc.) are used to bridge obstacles to completion of classroom tasks. This takes place within an

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<sup>1</sup>This research was part of a larger on-going ethnographic project on biliteracy conducted by Dr. Nancy Hornberger. During part of this phase of research I was assisted by Holly Stone and Iffat Farah.

individual (using a Khmer-English dictionary to look up an English word), but also between individuals (one student telling another in Khmer what the teacher just said in English). The latter is more observable, and so is the focus of my observations in the classroom.

For one school year (1990-1991) while I was an "observant participator"<sup>2</sup> in the adult ABE/ESL program, I taught and observed classes there five days a week. My observations of the class at SACA focused on the following:

- how and for what purposes written and oral Khmer were used to promote successful completion of tasks in class (relevant to my 6th research question)
- what functional and communicative acts the teacher and the students were involved in during literacy events (relevant to my research question 3a)
- which types of collaborative activities were supported by which biliteracy competencies (relevant to my research question 3c)
- how the teachers and students drew on their various language and literacy competencies to complete tasks in class (relevant to my research question 3c)

Focusing on these phenomena also helps me answer my comparative research question 4: how are the adults' acts during literacy events different

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<sup>2</sup>I use this phrase as opposed to a "participating observer." This distinction is similar to Junker's (1960: 146) distinction in social science research between the participant as observer, as I see myself, and the observer as participant. An observant participator's primary activity is participation in a social scene, while secondarily taking notes and reflecting upon that scene. A participating observer's primary activity is observation, while only occasionally being called upon to participate in the scene being observed.



from or similar to the types of acts the children display? Answers to the questions regarding the adult ESL classroom are discussed in chapter five.

### **In homes**

Following the classroom observations of 1990-1991, I visited the family of one of the women in the program, Bopha, to tutor her and her family in English and be tutored in Khmer. I visited her twice a week for one summer and into the next fall. From these visits I developed a general sense for the kinds of activities that went on at home, the kinds of interactions among family members. A year later I returned to Bopha's and three other families (Saram's, Nop's, and Lian's) for six months of more directed observations of language/literacy use and parent-child interaction.

The focus of my attention in the homes during the second phase of home observations was similar to my focus in the classrooms described above:

- how and for what purposes written and oral Khmer are used to promote successful completion of home literacy activities (relevant to my research question 6)
- what functional and communicative acts the parents and children are involved in during literacy events (relevant to my research questions 3a and 3b)
- how the parents and children draw on their various language and literacy competencies to complete home literacy tasks (relevant to my research question 3c)
- what family members say or do which indicate patterns of language use and language attitudes (relevant to my research questions 1 and 2)

These focused observations were intended to help me find answers to all three of my descriptive research questions. Again, answers to these questions are interpreted and compared with the results of other observations, for example linking how adults help each other in class on literate tasks and how parents and children help each other at home. Answers to these questions are discussed in chapters four and six.

### **In the community**

Through my involvement in SACA and students' homes, I was able to learn of other community happenings relevant to my research questions which I felt were important to attend/observe. The first was a summer program run by SACA for Southeast Asian children, which I visited two or three days a week in July of 1992. Also, through my home observations I learned of the importance of the public library as a site for children's after-school homework activity. I observed there three week-day afternoons over the course of one spring month in 1993. The observations at the summer program and at the library supplemented those in class and in homes by focusing specifically on children's acts during literacy events and patterns of language use.

In June of 1993 the director of SACA told me about a meeting in Chinatown he and other leaders in the Philadelphia Asian community were organizing to address the educational concerns of that community, specifically related to the incorporation of children's native languages in some systematic way into the local school curricula. I was able to observe that meeting, looking for stated attitudes toward language use and maintenance, and hear the reactions of one of my key informants who also attended. Information such as this turned out to be directly relevant to my research

questions concerning language attitudes and my final question regarding the relationship between the patterns of language attitudes and the maintenance or change of language, literacy and culture in this community.

### **Interviews**

I interviewed participants off and on over the three years of this study. I began in 1990 with an interview of the director of SACA. In 1992 I interviewed the educational director of SACA, the other Cambodian teacher, Hoeun, five of the students, and three of their children. In 1993 I interviewed two more students and one of their children.

The interviews with SACA staff focused on the purpose of the ESL/ABE program and attitudes toward language use in the classroom. The interviews with adults and children in the community intended to discover more about patterns of language use and language attitudes. To get adults to talk about these issues, their interviews had two main sections: questions about family language use and daily life, and questions about personal history (see Appendix D for the entire interview protocol). The interviews with children had three main sections: questions about school, questions about language use, and questions about Cambodia itself. I was interested in hearing about attitudes toward their various language competencies and how they made use of them, along with feelings related to ethno-linguistic identity. Findings from these interviews are integrated into chapters four, six, and seven.

### **Data analysis**

I audiotaped and transcribed most interviews (two students did not let me tape their interviews). For classroom observations I used a combination of

in-class and immediate post-class note-taking. For home observations, in order to minimize the self-consciousness of family members and maximize my participatory role, I relied entirely on post-visit writing up of notes. In one family's home I was able to audiotape and transcribe one hour of parent-child interaction around the computer, and on a separate afternoon videotape the same. I audiotaped and transcribed the community meeting in Chinatown.

All the above transcriptions and fieldnotes were entered, coded and catalogued on a computer. The notes were catalogued according to an evolving inventory of topics relevant to both the on-going research project of which my work was a part, and my own focus on specific language/literacy competencies being utilized (see Appendices A, B and C for an inventory of these notes). This method of data storage allowed me to quickly sort through years of notes for events involving similar topics, certain participants, certain competencies, or certain sites. The inventories also allowed me on occasion to easily count certain types of events or interactions.

The interpretations presented in the following chapters draw on both qualitative and quantitative analyses of my data, using the methods described above. The goal is to describe and compare language and literacy use, attitudes, and development as I observed them among adults and children in this Cambodian community.

## **Chapter Four:**

### **Language use and attitudes within a Cambodian Community**

#### **The Families**

The heart of this study is a cohort of families linked by parents' participation in the adult ESL/ABE class. Four of these families were frequently visited by me over the course of six months, and I visited the homes of another three families for interviews. These families have certain historic links: the parents are all in their thirties or forties and grew up in Cambodia. They all endured the reign of Pol Pot, fled Cambodia following the Vietnamese invasion, and spent years in refugee camps in Thailand. Their older children were born before fleeing Cambodia or in the camps, and their younger children have been born in the US. These younger children are now in elementary school (most are in the same elementary school). The parents all had limited education in Cambodia, from zero to six years of school, averaging about three. They all entered the US around 1982. They are all on public assistance. They do piecemeal labor such as landscaping, packing, or sewing when money is needed. They all have large TVs with VCRs and video game machines.

However, the point of this study is not to create a stereotype of what Cambodian families 'are like.' Beyond the surface similarities listed above are a great many differences, an understanding of which is necessary to begin

looking for an answer to my research questions about what literacy use, attitudes, and development look like in this community. To describe these differences, each family will be introduced below with a general description of family structure and home life, followed by more specific descriptive answers to the questions: What are the broad patterns of language and literacy use in this community? and, what language and literacy attitudes are prevalent in this community? These answers will be further analyzed in relation to my final interpretive question: What is the relationship between the patterns of language use and attitudes, the types of acts displayed during literacy events, and the maintenance or change of language, literacy and culture in this community?

### **Family structure and home life**

#### **Nop's family**

Nop's is the only home where I ate on the floor. The other families have stopped this traditional Cambodian manner of eating. One reason for this could be that there is no table that could seat Nop's twelve children. However, this manner of eating, and the fact that they eat traditional rich and bitter Cambodian dishes in a Cambodian way (men eating first, then children - I don't know when his wife ate), goes along with other aspects of Nop's home life.

Whenever I visited, Khmer music would be playing loudly on the stereo, or a Khmer movie on the VCR. His youngest daughters were often practicing traditional Khmer dance routines to the music. Khmer seemed to be spoken more here than in other homes (see section on language use). His living room is sparsely furnished, with a straw mat in the center where everyone sits while eating, playing, and watching TV. His home was



elaborately decorated with streamers during the Khmer New Year. Shoes are left at the front door. His apartment is in a building filled with other Cambodian families and is attached to a commercial block which is the heart of the West Philadelphia Cambodian community (there is a Cambodian grocery, a Cambodian-owned laundry, and a Cambodian video store). Nop's many children are in constant flow in and out of the apartment, and share in child care responsibilities (children as young as three holding and feeding the baby). When they go outside there always seem to be other Cambodian children for them to play with around the block, as well as African-American children. Once when I left Nop's a couple of his children were playing outside with a couple of African-American girls their age. I had seen Nop's older daughter earlier in the apartment with a long strand of rubber-bands used for Khmer jumping games. She and her brother were using the strand to play American-style jump rope with the other children, in an ad-hoc example of cultural change and fusion.

Despite such instances, Nop does not seem to particularly want his family to 'become American.' Once when discussing the building of a sand mountain, a traditional New Year's activity, he lamented fatalistically, "I want to take my son to see such things, and explain to him. But I don't go." Nop desires to maintain Cambodian traditions in his household, but I haven't seen him do much to actively promote it. He does not seem economically ambitious. I have never known him or his wife to do any work outside the home. He had spoken with me a couple of times about gem-mining in Cambodia. Someone once told me he had brought many gems with him to America and kept them in his apartment, but they were stolen.

### Saram's family

Saram's home is in a government-subsidized apartment building for families on public assistance. The building has been recently renovated and is in very good condition. One side of the building appears filled with Cambodian families, and the other side, with a separate entrance, is filled with African-American families. Her apartment is appointed with nice new electronics (big stereo, wide-screen TV) and furniture which seemed to reflect her and her husband's upwardly-mobile aspirations. They seek out much more piecemeal work than other Cambodian adults I have known (her husband, Chev, has been a foreman on landscaping work crews, and she has done sewing, janitorial, packing, and child-care work at various times). Saram told me she would continue working, 'because I make money.' She says she likes working. Chev has plans to go to truck-driving school. During the years I knew them they often spoke of plans to buy a house outside the city.

Their two boys go to school around the corner and have many friends in the building. One of them has attended Khmer class off and on at a nearby church, though his parents do not attend church. Though I never sensed a desire to 'be American' (they did not join an American church, cook much American food, or speak much English at home), I do believe they wanted to succeed here economically and educationally.

### Lian's family

Lian and her husband are Cambodian-Chinese. They both grew up in Phnom Penh, bilingual/biliterate in Khmer and the local Chinese dialect. She considers herself more Chinese than Cambodian. The family speaks Chinese (her children do not speak any Khmer) at home. Lian's living room is full of Chinese artifacts, images, and writing. There are Chinese calendars, a Chinese

clock, a Chinese scroll, Chinese posters, lots of pictures of Asian models, family photos, incense. There are many Chinese video tapes in a drawer. There are a half dozen large plants (for cooking and medicinal purposes). Lian has an extensive knowledge of Chinese medical practices, and uses them for herself and her children. Once while the children were playing on the computer Lian went to a large plant in a corner of the room and plucked a couple of leaves. She took them off to the kitchen to wash them. She brought them back and began eating them. "For cough," she told me. She also grows peppers for cooking.

Lian and her husband still observe Buddhist traditions. She told me once that the Sunday before she had gone with a group of elderly Chinese to a cemetery in a different part of the city to 'see her father', who died in 1986. It was a Chinese ancestor-worship day. She had a few shrines set up around the house, with fruit (bananas and Chinese pears) and incense, that were related to this day. One was at the shrine in the kitchen and one was set up on a window ledge. On a dresser in the living room was some fruit, some incense, and an empty box that once held VSOP Remy Martell cognac. I suppose her father used to drink it. When Lian's family moved to a new apartment, before they moved in she burnt incense in every room, laid out fruit, and installed a new shrine (with lights) in the living room.

For most meals she makes a combination of Chinese, Cambodian, and Vietnamese dishes. Her children can be very picky about eating her food, however. She once prepared a Cambodian noodle dish involving putting various types of fresh herbal leaves on top, along with fresh cucumber. Her youngest son, when he came in to eat, refused to eat the leaves. Lian said he didn't like Cambodian food. The dish Lian prepared for him had almost no leaves in it, but he carefully picked through it and pulled out a few traces. I

asked him why he didn't like them. "They nasty," he said, "They get all in your teeth." Her family does not all eat at once - first her husband (and myself), then the children trickle in when they feel like it (her three boys first, typically, then her daughter), and finally Lian will sit and eat.

Lian has sent her children to a different school from others in her neighborhood, where there are fewer Asian students. Lian wanted her children to go to school with 'Americans.' She has a strongly expressed desire for her children to grow up in the company of other 'Americans' (by which she means fluent English speakers), and not be schooled with other non-English speaking children. She believes this is in their best education interests. However, she also wants them to become literate in Chinese, and often complains about their poor Chinese (see section on language use). She has paid for them to have Chinese instruction, but the children don't like it. The children speak English with all their friends in the neighborhood (Lao, Chinese, Cambodian, African-American).

Lian has been able to earn money on the side by cutting hair in her home, and devotes much of it to materials for her children's schooling (paying for the Chinese classes, buying a computer, educational software, the 'Hooked on Phonics' materials). Lian seems generally committed to full biculturalism for her family, and economic success.

### **Bopha's family**

Bopha's family lives in the smallest, most run-down apartment of all the families I have visited. The hallways all smell of urine and I once had to step quietly over a sleeping woman to get to Bopha's apartment. They are the only non-African-Americans in the building. Her husband only occasionally works to supplement their public assistance. Their second-hand furniture

comes mostly from a school (some children's desks and chairs, a low round table which looks to be from a school library).

There is almost nothing in the home to mark it as being inhabited by Cambodians, except a bilingual dictionary and a few old materials from a refugee camp. The only decorations are pictures of the children and their awards from school. The TV is almost always on, and the children seem to control it, flipping from cartoon to cartoon all afternoon. At dinner time Bopha and her husband watch the local news, from which they try to learn English vocabulary. Bopha's family eats more American food than any other family I've visited. They eat a lot of food from the McDonald's across the street from a public library the children go to almost every afternoon after school.

Bopha takes her children to a Christian church down the street, and seems committed to becoming Christian and rejecting Buddhism. Neither herself or her children socialize with other Cambodians. They seem to always be in the apartment, at the library, or at school. Her four children are doing extremely well in school, her youngest son being recently recommended for a mentally gifted program. The parents don't seem to have any economic ambitions, but want to become 'American' and have their children succeed in school.

#### Chanta's family

Chanta's husband left her a few years ago and she is raising three children on her own (a teen-aged boy, a girl in elementary school, and a baby). Chanta describes her day centered around child care. In the morning she says she takes care of her baby, takes her daughter to school, brings her home. She lives across the hall from Saram, and their families are very close. Her



apartment is not as well-stocked with Western furnishings as Saram's, and Chanta does not seek out the jobs that Saram and her husband do. Chanta seems to rely on their help for many things. Her children play with the other Cambodian children in the building. Like Saram, Chanta has not joined any American churches, but neither have I seen her making any particular effort to maintain her Cambodian culture for herself or her children.

### **Bantu's family**

Bantu is also raising her children by herself. I do not know what happened to her husband. She is trying very hard to be Mormon. She says she reads her Khmer version of the Book of Mormon everyday. When I interviewed her and her children she was visited by Mormon elders who asked her to do some work for the church. She has many Cambodian friends, and lives near the heart of the Cambodian commercial block.

### **Loun's family**

Loun lives about five blocks from the families above, and her children go to a school where there are very few Asians (the same school Lian's children go to). She attends an American church. She seems to be making more of an effort than any of the other families to educate her children in Khmer. They regularly go to classes at an Episcopal church where they learn to read and write in Khmer. I often see her children playing in front of her home with other Cambodian children.

### **Discussion**

What is the relationship between language maintenance or change and culture maintenance or change in this community? As can be seen from the



descriptions above, there are numerous qualitative differences between these families in terms of life goals, religious practices, and social networks. There also do not seem to be any set correlations between those three overt socio-cultural features and efforts toward native language maintenance. Most especially, there does not seem to be an obvious relationship between how 'Cambodian' (or Chinese) one's home life is and native language literacy development.

For example, Lian strongly desires that her children become 'American' through English-only public education by 'American' teachers. However, this attitude co-exists with determined efforts at maintaining Chinese culture and language within her home. Lian has a rigid and separate allocation of use of Chinese literacy to a domain at home outside that of school. For another example, Bantu's reading of the Khmer Book of Mormon was one of the only examples I saw in all the families of recreational reading in Khmer (excluding the Khmer-English dictionary). She is maintaining her native language literacy by using it in a new religious domain. Similarly, Loun's and Saram's children study Khmer at an American Christian church.

Conversely, in Bopha's family, which she seems to be trying to make wholly 'American,' there are no efforts at native language maintenance. And in Nop's wholly 'Cambodian' household (with Cambodian food, clothes, music, dancing and art) there are also no efforts at developing his children's Khmer literacy. Nop is not making any special effort to define a domain within his home for his children to study Khmer. As can be seen in Lian's, Loun's, and Saram's families, these domains need to be consciously and deliberately constructed, as they do not seem to spontaneously 'arise' as the Cambodian food, dancing, and music do. Both Bopha's and Nop's attempts at

mono-culturalism, American or Cambodian, are perhaps preventing them from perceiving a need to actively be engaged in L1 maintenance efforts.

The relationship between language and culture is an ongoing concern of this study, and will be returned to in the sections which follow and in following chapters. At this point it looks possible that there is a relationship in these families between efforts at first language maintenance and development and a tolerance of cultural pluralism and adaptation.

### **Language and literacy use and attitudes within each family**

All the homes I visited as part of this study were multilingual. Generally this multilingualism fit within well known patterns of who-speaks-what-to-whom in immigrant families, with children speaking more and more English as they moved up through elementary school and beyond, and parents speaking almost only Cambodian or Chinese. However, the families varied in attitudes expressed toward this state of affairs and efforts being made to change the current domains of language use. Here, drawing on observational and interview data, I will describe some particulars of language and literacy use, attitudes toward language and literacy, and approaches to language learning first among Cambodian children, and then within each family.

### **Children's language use and attitudes**

During participant-observation in the children's summer program, I noticed certain patterns in Cambodian children's language use with their peers. At a basic interpersonal level most of the elementary school-aged children seem as fluent in English as any other American 7-10 year olds. During my observations I heard as much English as Khmer. None of the

children had trouble speaking to me in English, or speaking to each other in Khmer. They switched frequently and fluidly between the two. They could talk for a long time in any one language, or code-switch intersententially. They may have been most comfortable in Khmer, it being a kind of 'unmarked' conversational condition when two children were sitting and talking by themselves. But it seems as if many things could trigger a switch: if a non-Khmer speaker sat with them, if they started arguing, or if they started talking about some aspect of American pop culture (TV, movies, music). They could switch to fit audience, topic, or mood.

When I later interviewed some boys who attended the summer program, they told me they mostly spoke Khmer at home (90%), but identified English with talking on the phone (to "Americans") and when arguing during a game. I had little exposure to the children's 'academic language proficiency,' but their literacy competencies were by and large limited to English. I never observed a child spontaneously writing in the Khmer or Lao scripts, while I often saw children write their names using the Latin script.

In an interview with the oldest son of one of the ABE/ESL students, I heard a similar description of home language use. His parents grew up in Phnom Penh, but are ethnically Chinese and speak a dialect of Chinese at home. He said, "Mostly I speak English at home, but sometimes I just speak Chinese with my mom." He also speaks Chinese with his aunt. He said he usually spoke English with his brothers and sister, and sometimes Chinese, "but not all the time." He could not specify what they used Chinese for, not thinking they had any rules for language choice. He said he used English with all his friends, who are 'American,' and Lao. I observed all this to be true,

except I believe he speaks Chinese more frequently with his siblings than he admits.

On one occasion I interviewed four boys from three different families in the apartment of one of my students. During the interview other boys came and went. The site of the interviews and the choice of participants was guided by knowledge gained from observations that these boys were in the center of a large peer network.

I asked the Khmer-speaking boys if they liked Khmer (Cambodian<sup>1</sup>). One boy said, "How could you not like Cambodian? It's your language." I asked them how they would rate their Khmer ability, and they generally had high opinions of it. When I first asked them if they thought their Khmer was any different from their parents' they all said there was no difference. After I asked them again about this (asking specifically about differences in pronunciation and vocabulary) they conceded that they speak "American Cambodian." I asked them if they went to Cambodia, would children there think they spoke differently, and they said yes. They assumed this difference would be viewed negatively there: "They beat you up." "You go to school they gonna whip you with some ruler." So along with pride in native language ability, they were aware of its distinct "Americaness," their language variety identifying them as Cambodian-American rather than Cambodian.

Only one boy, one of Saram's sons, had studied a little Khmer literacy, which he demonstrated by calling out the Khmer alphabet. He was interested in writing to a cousin in Cambodia. They all, however, exhibited a lack of interest in learning more Khmer (i.e. vocabulary, reading and writing, grammar). When I asked if learning to write Khmer is harder than learning

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<sup>1</sup>Cambodians almost always use the word "Cambodian" to refer to their native language, not "Khmer," although I tend to use the latter term.

to write English they all said yes. One boy said, "Cambodian letters are like..." and made loopy motions in the air with his fingers, trying to imitate the shape of Khmer letters. They thought the Khmer letters themselves were difficult to make.

I asked them if their parents had tried to teach them any Khmer, or if they wanted them to. Mostly the parents did not try, and the boys did not want them to. When I asked one boy why he didn't want them to, he said in a mock-serious voice, "Life is *so* complicated." I believe he meant school gave them enough work to do, and studying Khmer would be only so much more homework, without any purpose.

When I asked Lian's son Tran if he 'likes' Chinese, he was unable to answer. When I asked him if he would like to study more Chinese, he said "yeah." After I asked him why, he said, "I want to travel around ... I wanna ask some other people who speak Chinese, I could ask them questions." Tran studied for a year in a weekend Chinese program for children at the Chinese Association, but he didn't like it. Tran is more interested in learning to speak Chinese than learning to read and write it. The only functional domain he sees for Chinese is for oral communication with other Chinese speakers. He can see no need for Chinese literacy.

I also asked the Khmer-speaking boys what they knew about Cambodia, trying to get at attitudes toward ethnic identity. I asked them if their parents had told them much about Cambodia, and if they were interested in learning more. One boy told me, "Sometimes she [his mother] talk about the past, when somebody come, when you were born, when we came here, the year we came here. ...They talk about war, and all that stuff, and then we run..."

When I asked Tran if Lian ever told him stories about Cambodia, he also told me about an incident that occurred when he was a baby. "Once she



told me a story where she was in the war and she told me when I was little baby my dad was supposed to keep his eye on me..." He fell in a river, got lost, and floated away. His mother found him and shook him to revive him.

The children's knowledge of Cambodia is focused on particular family histories - what happened to their parents, what happened to them when they were younger. The boys seem most interested about learning about things that happened when they were little, not (as might be expected) decontextualized information about Cambodian or Chinese history and culture.

My interviews with the boys point out a seeming contradiction: confidence and pride in L1 oral fluency was combined with a lack of desire to pursue L1 study, particularly L1 literacy. Children have functional command of the competencies for which there are domains of use: oral English, written English and oral L1. I have described how the children are orally fluent bilinguals, being able to codeswitch frequently but purposefully. They have pride in their oral abilities in their L1 while also being aware of their distinct ethnolinguistic identity as Cambodian (Cambodian/Chinese) Americans. They can draw upon their various competencies to collaborate with their parents in accomplishing educational tasks related to either their or their parents' schooling.

### **Nop's family**

#### **Language Use**

With most of his friends, neighbors and children, Nop speaks only Cambodian. When asked what language he likes to speak most (intv., 6.16.94), he said "I speak Cambodian at home. But in class I speak English." He said he spoke Cambodian all the time, "Because I speak to my relatives my language,



is Cambodian." He said he sometimes writes letters in Cambodian to relatives in Cambodia. When Nop was asked when he needed to read Khmer he paused a while and said, "All the time." Mostly, he reads a Khmer-English dictionary. "If there is some word I don't understand I can open the dictionary to see the word that I don't know. I can understand when I see the word that I don't understand." After seeing some word in English class he doesn't understand, "I go to my house, I read again. There some word I don't understand, I can open my dictionary, the word Cambodian I can understand."

When asked where he needed to use English, he said "I need speak English only in class." During the interview he had trouble thinking of any place other than the classroom where he needed to speak English. After some thought he added, "When I meet foreigner...[meaning Americans] I speak English." He also said he speaks some English in various service encounters, and with the counselor at school. However, in his interview Nop always came back to the classroom as the primary domain of English use.

Khmer literacy serves several functions in Nop's study of English. For one, he uses it for transliteration of English:

4.23.93; Nop's; 4:00<sup>2</sup>

After I model pronunciation for 'nausea' for him, Nop gets out a sheet of paper and writes down the pronunciation using Khmer script. He is surprised by the pronunciation, saying he has always said /naw si/.

He also uses Khmer literacy for simple translation:

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<sup>2</sup>I present notes in this dissertation roughly as they appear in the catalogued fieldnotes which I took during, or immediately following, observations. They include the date of the event, whose apartment it occurred in, and the time. In my catalogued notes each entry also has a list of participants and a title, which have been deleted here.

5.23.93; Nop's; 4:00

Nop and I sit on the floor and Nop shows me his finished translation of the news article on Cambodian elections from the Philadelphia newspaper. It is very neatly done. He had made many copies of the article. The translation is written in the margins of the article in red ink, paragraph by paragraph.

But Nop perceives that there is the possibility that Khmer language use interferes with his full acquisition of English:

3.13.93; Nop's; 10:00

Nop tells me that though he has studied English for some years now, he 'forget all.' He says it is because after class he comes home and 'speak only Cambodian.' All his youngest daughters (through maybe 1st grade) don't seem to speak much English (one of them badly shows off her "A B Ds" for me).

I do believe that there is a higher percentage of Khmer spoken in Nop's home than in other homes I visit. This might be because he has so many pre-school aged children, who have not yet attended the local elementary school's ESOL program. Nop blames his inability to learn English on this.

The parent-child relationship is somewhat mediated by language use, and differences in complexes of competencies leads at times to powerful gaps in communication:

5.30.93; Nop's; 10:00

I am sitting on the floor working with Nop on translating a news article from a Philadelphia paper. Only one of his young daughters is around. She is about five years old. She is sitting on the floor on the other side of the room. She has a page that looks like it has been torn out of a coloring book. Pictures of ponies on both sides of the paper have been colorfully decorated. As Nop and I are working she writes something on the top of the page and then holds it up for me to see. She has written "Fuck you" in

red crayon. Later she brings it over and shows it to her father. He dismisses it with the back of his hand. (I don't believe he tried to read it, or would understand it if he had.) A little while later she also shows it to her mother, who also pays it no attention.

### **Approaches to language**

As seen above, the use of the L1 for studying English is a common learning strategy for Nop. Learning how to read English aloud well is a primary learning goal for Nop (see his use of Khmer to transliterate the spelling of 'nausea'). When asked what was difficult about English, Nop said in his interview that "Difficult to read because pronunciation is not clear." To Nop, 'reading' means reading aloud. I have heard this repeated many times by other Cambodians, that 'pronunciation' is the hardest thing about learning to read English.

So his approach to language development would seem to depend on translation (a strategy relying on strong first language competency), and a collapse of the typical distinction made in language courses between reading and pronunciation, between literacy and orality. This could be a translation issue, given that the Cambodian word for reading, '*an*,' is associated strongly with reading aloud in school and temple.

Nop demonstrated an 'autonomous' (Street, 1984), segmented approach to helping me with my own Khmer literacy:

3.13.93; Nop's; 10:00

I start my visit to Nop's home by asking him to check the Khmer I had copied into the computer from the list he had written, and help me with what I could not read. There are of course a few mistakes in what I had written. To show me what to write, he asks one of his daughters to get him a pad and pen and he writes it down for me and reads each character

to me to write. He helps me find characters on the keyboard crib-sheet when I am confused.

5.9.93; Nop's; 10:00

Nop gives me a little Khmer lesson, which I don't really need, about how the consonant and vowel letters combine to produce syllables. He demonstrates with 'ka,' (k) combining it with all the vowels in the standard way of reading the Khmer syllabary ("ka, ke, ki, ko...").

### Language attitudes

Why did Nop want to study English? "Because I want to know to read, to know about the word English. I want to talk to another people." Because he was in the United States, he saw it as a kind of duty to learn English: "In my opinion, when I stay in United States, I must learn English to talk with American people. When I come back to my country, the people in my country say, 'when you live in United States, what do you do?' I say, so I don't want to learn, I shy them [I was too shy to talk with Americans]." He would feel embarrassed and ashamed to have lost the opportunity to learn English. He does see a functional communicative purpose to English: "I think I live in United States, I must learn. When I go everywhere someone to talk with me, I don't understand, I cannot talk back. I want to know, I can talk back."

When asked why he wanted to learn to read and write in English, Nop said "Because I want to know." 'Knowing' English is an end in itself. I've heard other indications in this community that "knowing" as a concept is different from "learning" or even "understanding." One learns English, and then one understands it, and finally one *knows* it. This is a complex issue that further investigation into cultural definitions of knowledge, and the relationship between learning and knowledge, could shed light on.

During the interview Nop had trouble with linking the ideas of 'necessity' and literacy. What one *needs* to read and write is a very complex question. Nop says what he *can* do, not what he has to do. He can analyze metacognitively his abilities, but not the purposes of those abilities. Nop associates use of English almost exclusively with English class, until he is prompted otherwise. This circular association (learning English so you can use it with people in English class) is echoed throughout the interview. Regarding the 'need' for L1 literacy, it is interesting that Nop's primary L1 text is the Cambodian-English dictionary, which he uses to decode his primary L2 texts, class materials and other texts the teacher has given him. These L2 texts are read so that he can learn to read them.

When Nop was asked if he wanted to read more in Cambodian, he replied "I think in Cambodian I know some." He wasn't interested in developing his Cambodian any more. His current Khmer competencies seem to fit his functional needs. This lack of interest in Khmer was perhaps echoed by his children. Once I designed a computerized 'school' laid out so the user could explore from room to room, finding new things to do. Many of the doors in this school were labeled in Khmer. I showed this to two of Nop's children, Sopha and Bun:

2.26.93; Nop's; 4:00

Sopha and Bun play together on the computer going through the 'cyberschool' stack. However, they show no interest in the Khmer that appears in it, and just run around it from room to room. They don't ask Nop or myself what the Khmer means, or even comment on its presence.

### Saram's family

#### Language use

I had visited Saram's a few times before I interviewed her, so I already knew that there were almost no printed materials around the house in either English or Khmer. When I asked her if she read anything (Newspaper, books, TV guide) she said no, laughing (intv., 1.22.92). After some prodding she said she read something like 'word examples.' I think she meant reading words she had learned in our class. Regarding her husband Chev's language use, she told me he didn't speak English. She said he studied a little bit, and used to take classes.

Saram told me her husband and sons talk in Khmer during dinner. I asked her what they talked about and she said, "tell my sons to do their homework. And no watch TV a lot and no play games a lot. And he tell about 10 o'clock or 9 o'clock go to sleep. Because my sons have school tomorrow." Khmer is the father's medium of involvement in his sons' schooling.

I asked Saram if her sons ever spoke English with each other. She said, "Yeah. When he talk to me and my husband he talk English but my husband he don't understand. And he translate English to Cambodian." She added about her sons' use of English: "He speak English. But sometimes I don't understand and when I heard they speak to his brother, and I ask him, and he say Khmer." As I asked Saram about both of her sons, when she says 'he speak English' I believe she is referring to both of her sons (I know from experience as her teacher that she has trouble with pronominal reference in English).

These statements reveal a couple of aspects of child language use in this community. One is that the language of choice, even at home in a 'family' domain, is often the language of school, English. Saram is telling me that her sons speak a language around her which she does not understand well. To understand what they are doing, talking about, she must ask them to



speak in a language she understands. It is her responsibility to do this. Her sons will not speak in Khmer for her benefit unless they are asked to. Such interaction is an example of how children's roles in Cambodian refugee families are strongly related to their language competencies.

### **Language attitudes/approaches**

2.13.93; Saram's; 11:00

While I was eating lunch, Saram's husband Chev was reading a big Khmer-English dictionary. He came over to me once pointing to the word "furrier" asking me to pronounce it for him. He seemed to be reading the dictionary recreationally, as if it were a novel, not taking notes or using it to understand some other text.

The dictionary is often the only Khmer text to be found in a Cambodian family's home. As noted above regarding Nop's use of the dictionary, it could be an indication that the function of Khmer literacy is subservient to English literate development. Chev reads his dictionary in order to learn English. That he is also maintaining and perhaps even developing his Khmer literacy is incidental. Such reliance on a dictionary also indicates that English is largely viewed as a list of words to be mastered. However, the dictionary does not help with pronunciation, the component of English reading which many Cambodians have told me is the hardest, so Chev used me as a resource to get at that information.

Attitudes toward writing in Khmer were not obvious at Saram's, but an incident where I had asked her to write something for me is telling:

2.13.93; Saram's; 11:00

For homework I had asked Saram to answer a couple questions I had written about the computer. Her answers are very short. I had written at the end of the assignment, "You can write in Khmer or English." She had

interpreted this as another question and had written, "I can write both." After I explain to her that I had meant she could write her answers in Khmer or English (not easy to get her to do) she sits back down and translates all her answers into Khmer, even translating "I can write both" into Khmer.

Saram goes on to read the Khmer to me and translate the parts I don't understand. She explains one mark to me that I have not seen before (+). I get out the Khmer keyboard and she points it out to me. While we were going over it her sons were still playing a game on my computer, and they paid no attention to what Saram and I were doing.

At the time I felt Saram was resisting the written use of Khmer. It seemed very unnatural to her to be writing Khmer in that domain ("assignment from English teacher"). She didn't seem to particularly enjoy it or take the opportunity to elaborate on her English responses. It turned into a simple translation exercise. Her children were also unengaged in the event. That was a common pattern, where a parent would be displaying their native language literacy to *me*, while their children paid no attention.

### Lian's family

#### Language use

I asked Lian what language her children spoke at dinner, and she replied "my children speak English. I sometimes speak English, speak Chinese. ... More Chinese, my children more English" (intv., 6.29.93). Her children "speak Chinese good, speak English good. But my children like English. All the children speak English ... Chinese, not a lot." I observed at Lian's the type of communication difficulty which can arise between parents and children when they are not fluent in a common language:

3.16.93; Lian's; 4:00

I am in the kitchen where Lian is making me a cup of coffee. Her children arrive home. Lian's daughter Mei comes into the kitchen and Lian tells me they have been at the library. I tease Mei by saying they were playing outside, not at the library. Lian says something to her in a mixture of Chinese and English. They have a momentary communication problem, and Lian complains that Mei doesn't understand Chinese, though Mei doesn't seem to understand Lian's English either.

When I tried to draw on the children's Chinese language abilities in order to communicate certain ideas to Lian, I often ran into the barrier of their own limited Chinese competency. In the next example from my notes Lian and her children had been working on an English spelling activity on the computer:

5.4.93; Lian's; 4:00

One of the words used in the spelling activity is 'snail.' Lian asks me what this is, and I ask the children what the word means in Chinese. They don't answer. I draw a picture of it for Lian. She then says the Chinese word for it to her children, repeating it a few times, and complains "They don't speak Chinese!" None of them paid attention to learning the Chinese word for snail, so Lian teaches it to me. She then tells me what it is in Khmer. Another word is used on the computer, 'rail,' and the children try to explain it to Lian in Chinese. Tran uses hand-gestures to express himself, but obviously doesn't know the exact Chinese translation. Lian again complains to me about their Chinese ability.

In these examples can be seen a bridge over which no one can completely cross. Children and parents try to meet half-way, sometimes successfully, sometimes not.

I know Lian's children switch back-and-forth between Chinese and English quite frequently. Although I know there must be some pattern to the code-switching I have been unable to determine it. I asked her oldest son, Trai, what they used the two languages for, but he couldn't say (intv, 6.22.93).

The example below shows three of the children working together on the computer using English:

5.18.93; Lian's; 4:00

Tran, Chen, and Mei are on the computer using SuperPaint, playing around with the pattern-editing tool. Tran is on the keyboard as Chen and Mei watch on, giving suggestions and responding to the patterns he creates. They use English. I'm beginning to think they only use Chinese with each other in quiet asides, non-task related.

The children rarely demonstrated a knowledge of Chinese literacy. This is one of the few such instances, which wasn't very successful:

3.30.93; Lian's; 4:00

Mei, Tran, Chen, Lian and I have been looking through a Mandarin book I have brought over. Chen writes down a Chinese character on a piece of notebook paper and asks me if I know what it is, but I don't. He tells me it's a number, but he doesn't know what the number is. I show it to Lian and she doesn't know what the character is either. The number Chen was trying to write is a little different. I look up the character Chen did make in the Chinese book I have brought and it says 'eye.' I show this to Lian but she disagrees and shows me a different character for eye.

I instigated this incident by bringing the Mandarin book over. Though all were interested in the book, and momentarily in Chinese characters, Lian was only interested in sharing her knowledge with me, not her children. She didn't correct her son, or teach him the number he was trying to write.

In the example below Lian can be seen appropriating English literacy for her own use, fusing it with a literacy of her own:

3.9.93; Lian's; 4:00

Lian has written over a note she wrote to me last week. She has changed a couple words. She now calls it a song, and sings a little of it, quietly. The word 'best' has been changed to 'good' because, she says, it sounds better

when sung (it's "lower" in tone). She also adds the word 'today' to 'How are you' when she sings, though this is not written into either version. Stopping and starting, she sings the whole letter to me in a slow, subtly modulated Chinese style. I guess the tune is to another song, but I couldn't get Lian to confirm this. It seems she has made the small changes in the text in order for it to fit the tune better:

How are you today?  
 You are my good teacher.  
 You help me speak English,  
 and help me and my family with the computer.  
 I'm really happy.  
 Thank you, Joel.

Lian has fused her English written competency with a lyric competency she perhaps has in Chinese to create a distinctive communicative act. Literacy practices in her home are in flux, as she finds ways to maintain certain aspects of her Chinese communicative competency through the medium of her developing English literacy.

### Approaches

Like Nop, Lian demonstrates an approach to her L1 which could indicate she has an 'autonomous' view of literacy, with attention to the fundamentals of Chinese character construction and pronunciation. This was evident in her interest in instructing me in aspects of Chinese literacy:

3.16.93; Lian's; 4:00

Lian points out the Chinese character for 'ache' in her list to me and how it appears in the Chinese words for 'stomach ache' and 'headache.'

3.30.93; Lian's; 4:00

Lian carefully reads to me a recipe I asked her to write for a Chinese coconut dessert, making sure I understand it. She is especially concerned

with the word for a gelatin substance (agar), and writes the Chinese characters for them over and over again on a separate piece of paper, so I can take it into a store and ask for it. She goes off to the kitchen for the bag of agar to show me.

2.23.93; Lian's; 4:00

Lian points out some of the Chinese characters in some homework I asked her to write, noting how the one for 'doctor' is different now from the way it used to be. She shows me the older more complex character, next to the simpler one [she says she prefers the older way]. She does this for another character as well. She repeats the Chinese reading of the characters a number of times for me, getting me to repeat.

Lian's approach to teaching me Chinese was character and pronunciation oriented. Note that I am the object of Lian's Chinese lessons in each of the above examples. I have never seen her act that way with her own children, give them direct instruction on Chinese writing, though there seemed to be ample opportunities to do so.

### **Language attitudes**

Lian has very firm attitudes toward language education in the local public school. She brought them up one night at dinner:

4.6.93; Lian's; 4:00

During dinner Lian starts talking about her children's performance in school, especially Tran's. She is a little disappointed in his grades. She seems to blame ESOL for it. Apparently he was one of her only kids to be pulled out for a couple years for ESOL when he was younger. It seems she didn't know about it until later. She doesn't like the ESOL program at all. Firstly she didn't like her child in a classroom full of students who were not "Americans" (meaning native English speakers). She thought it prevented the ESOL students from learning proper English. Secondly, she



didn't like how the child missed what went on in their regular classroom while they were away in ESOL. She picked up on the problem of the rest of the class working on something like math or science while the child was pulled out for ESOL, so they would miss things. "Not Good!"

I attended a community meeting in a church in the Philadelphia Chinatown at which parents and community leaders spoke to the president of the board of education about the education of their children. I had told the students about it and urged them to go. Lian was one of the students who did. She left the meeting early, and the next day I asked her about it:

6.8.93; Lian's; 4:00

The day following the community meeting I visit Lian. It turns out she left early because she was so upset with what was being said. She disagreed strongly with most of the speakers and had refused to sign the petition asking for more bilingual teachers. She thought everyone who wanted Chinese or Cambodian teachers was crazy (especially the man who had spoken in Cambodian). "American teachers good" she said over and over. She felt no Cambodian or Chinese teacher would speak English good enough to teach her children. She complains about an incident with one of Hien's teachers who had made mistakes in English and was corrected by Hien at school. "Hien more smart than teacher!" This fits with her dislike of ESOL because she wanted her children in class with other American children, not other Asian children. However, when I asked her how she would feel about a Cambodian or Chinese teacher who grew up here and spoke perfect English, she said OK, that's fine. I think she has trouble imagining such a person. She doesn't know any teacher-aged Cambodian or Chinese person who grew up here. That is the most important issue for her, that they grew up here.

Also, Lian would very much like her children to study Chinese one or two hours a day, something no one else who spoke at the meeting in Chinatown mentioned. So she is paradoxically more interested in cultural/linguistic

maintenance than others at that meeting, while more 'pro-American' regarding English teachers. Her opinions are very strong on all these issues.

I asked Lian if she wanted her children to speak more Chinese (intv. 6.29.92). "No, a little, more English." I confirmed that she liked that they spoke more English, and she said "Yeah, I like that." She then had a little trouble in the interview, wanting to say something she could only say in Chinese, and consulted her son Hien in Chinese. She then said, "Chinese, OK, English, OK." Her last statement indicates a positive attitude toward use of both languages, and implies that in her mind they don't conflict with each other. Lian was firmly committed to bilingualism. As stated before, despite her pro-English-only public education stance, she desires her children to speak better Chinese:

5.18.93; Lian's; 4:00

After talking about Latin, we begin to talk generally about languages. Tran asks me if I know any Mandarin. Lian tells the children that starting again in the fall, she will send them to Chinese classes. "You'll pay?" they ask. All the kids ask why she won't pay for them to go to extra English classes, which they would prefer. Lian is adamant. "You must speak Chinese, talk to my mother, my sister." The children don't seem to care. They emphasize that they think the time and money would be better spent studying English.

### **Bopha's family**

#### **Language use**

I asked Bopha if she read or told stories to the children (intv., 1.23.92). She said she did not tell stories, like the old Cambodian folk stories she learned as a child. However, her household is filled with print and her children make frequent use of it. Bopha told me her children liked to read to

themselves, rather than her reading to them. Jimmy, who was four years old at the time, would sometimes come up to her with a word he wanted to know from a book he was trying to read. She showed me a basal reader of Lena's, who was in elementary school. Lena or her older sister Pech often read Lena's school book to Jimmy, so that he knew the story and could memorize what was written on every page. Bopha thought it was funny that Jimmy could act like he was reading, running his finger across a page in a basal reader he had memorized, and he would say different words from the one he would be pointing to with his finger.

The children also created texts together:

2.3.93; Bopha's; 4:00

Bopha shows me the booklet of construction paper I left for Jimmy last week. On a space on the cover (Written by \_\_\_\_\_) is written 'Jimmy' and 'Leav.' On the first page begins a story called "The little red hen." The title had been erased and re-written a couple of times, as had the first line of the story. The story is written on straight rule-drawn lines. They say Leav wrote the story. There are some pictures of birds, cats and mice on the bottom of each page, some of which were drawn by Jimmy. His name is next to one of them.

Bopha said during dinner her children mostly talk about 'studies.' She asks them what they studied, but mostly they talk with each other about problems they had with their studies, and they help each other. They talk with each other in English. Bopha often notes that her children prefer to talk with each other in English, that their Khmer isn't very good and they didn't know many words. If she asks her children a question in Khmer, they will answer her mostly in English, with only a little Khmer mixed in.

Bopha watches a lot of TV (it was on for the whole interview, and during most of my visits to her home). She watches local news in the

morning and at noon. She watches lots of soap operas (The Young and the Restless, The Bold and the Beautiful). I asked her if she knew the characters and the stories, but she says no, she 'only watch.' Later she mentioned the names of some of the characters in one show, and part of the story. I asked Bopha if she watched videos, but she said she hadn't for years because their VCR was broken. There was a small stack of videos under the TV. She said they were copied for them by a friend a long time ago, and where Thai and Chinese videos dubbed into Khmer. This is one of the only homes where I have never seen native-language videos being watched.

Bopha reads the Bible in the afternoon, both in English and in Khmer. She reads them side-by-side so she could 'translate' them when she had trouble understanding a word. Church plays a large role in Bopha's life, and much of her writing incorporates the language of church texts. At the end of one assignment I gave her, which was to write about her favorite teacher when she was young, Bopha added:

*I NOW heed that call.*

[I now heed that call.]

Bopha's reading of the Khmer Bible is one of the only examples, along with another case of a woman reading a Khmer Book of Mormon, of engagement with a Khmer text other than the dictionary. She is also one of the only community members I know who ever wrote a creative, unsolicited native language text (Lian wrote some things in Chinese in response to an assignment from me, and Nop wrote a long translation). Bopha called her text a song, and I asked her if we could type it into the computer:

2.10.93; Bopha's; 4:00

We type Bopha's song into the computer, which turns out to be a long and difficult task. Her youngest son Jimmy is very bored with our activity and wants to play a game on the computer. Half way through entering the song I recommend waiting until next week to finish, partly because Jimmy is being so insistent about our quitting. I ask Bopha if we should stop and let him play the game, but she insists on finishing the whole thing now. Since her initial reluctance to do this, she has become very focused and engaged on this task.

Again, as has been noted before, Bopha's children paid no attention to her Khmer writing activity, and at least one was entirely put off by it.

I did record a couple of instances of Bopha's children using Khmer literacy. One instance (3.13.92) was from a time when Bopha brought her daughter Leav to the adult ESL class at SACA. To keep Leav occupied she gave her some papers which were lying around on which the children in an after-school program had practiced copying some Khmer consonants and vowels. Leav used these also to copy from during our class. She copied right over the other children's work. After Leav had done this for a while, Bopha gave her an English-language 'Children's Bible' to read.

In another instance I asked Bopha and her children to help me record pronunciations of the Khmer alphabet on my computer for an application I was developing:

5.5.93; Bopha's; 4:00

We record readings of three more Khmer letters, with Jimmy and Leav both trying to read the letters with Bopha. One of the letters is recorded by Jimmy, pronouncing as Bopha modeled for him. He says he wants to record the vowels, because he knows them. He reads the first row of vowels for me in a sing-song voice, "Sa-a, sa-e, sa-u, sa-o" etc. I ask him if he knows them all, and he says no, only the ones on top, and covers the

rest of the letters on the screen with his hand. He doesn't know the consonants. Bopha laughs at all this.

### **Approaches to language**

Once I wanted Bopha to check the Khmer which I had used in a computer activity I had put together. I had copied the Khmer from my own dictionary:

3.31.93; Bopha's; 4:00

First I get Bopha to check the Khmer I have typed in previously, most of which is wrong. Jimmy is *very* fidgety during this activity, constantly clicking around with the mouse and messing up what Bopha and I are doing. Bopha likes the activity, though. She likes correcting my Khmer. She uses my Khmer-English dictionary to help spell words.

I had noticed on other occasions how Bopha enjoyed correcting my Khmer. However, she wouldn't use these opportunities to actually help me learn more Khmer, or involve her children.

### **Language attitudes**

Bopha said her children don't speak Khmer well. "Not very Khmer well my children." I asked her how she felt about that, and she said older Cambodian people look down on her for not teaching her children better Khmer, that they were offended at her children's rude Khmer ("they don't know all the polite words"). However, Bopha said didn't want to teach them more Khmer because they already had too much to study for school, and they would become "confused" if she taught them more. I don't know if that was her real reason for not teaching her children Khmer or finding someone else who could. It fits with her general 'American' orientation (see chapter six) regarding food, religion, and TV viewing.



### Chanta's family

I asked Chanta what words her toddler David, who was about two at the time, said (intv., 1.22.92). She said he knew "mama" and "Bottle" in Khmer, and he knew the English word 'kiss.' She said he understood more Khmer than he could speak. Her six-year-old daughter Chanta also didn't know much English. I had tried to speak with her a few times at an after-school program at SACA, and she was very reticent to use English. Chanta herself knew less English than most of the Cambodian adults I knew.

I asked Chanta if she did homework in the afternoon, and she said "Yeah, but I don't know how to write." I knew Chanta often did no homework, because, as she told me once, "no one help her." She seemed to be one of the only Cambodians I knew who didn't have a family member who could act as an English resource. Her husband was gone, two of her children were too young, and her oldest son did not seem to be very helpful.

### Bantu's family

#### **Language use**

While I was interviewing Bantu a friend of hers came in with an arm-load of video tapes (2.8.92). They were Chinese movies dubbed into Khmer. Bantu was loaning them to her. Bantu had a large-screen TV and two VCRs. One of them was broken, she told me. Bantu said she didn't watch TV, "For one year, no TV, go to church." She is a member of the Mormon church. However, during the two hours of my visit there was a Cambodian movie playing on the VCR which her friends and children watched.

Bantu said she sometimes sang Khmer songs. Her son, who contributed to the interview, said she sang a lot, and was very good. She said

she sang new songs, but her son said she sometimes sang traditional songs. She sang at parties and for weddings.

Bantu writes letters to Cambodia. I asked her who she wrote to and she laughed and said 'personal!' Her friend on the couch said she writes to a boyfriend. Bantu just said she writes to 'friends.'

Bantu told me that in the afternoon she reads a lot. Her son repeated this, "she read a lot." She said she read 'Mormon' in Khmer and English, meaning the Book of Mormon. She pulled out her Khmer version. It was a big, black leather-bound edition written entirely in Khmer. When I asked her which she read more of, the Khmer or the English, she initially said 'the same,' but after I rephrased the question she said Khmer. Her son agreed. This sounds similar to how Bopha read the Bible.

### **Language attitudes**

Bantu's son said they spoke English at home. I asked her daughter, who was sitting behind us during the interview, which they spoke more often, and she said they spoke more Khmer. Bantu said she thought they spoke a lot of English. I asked her if that was alright with her, and she said yes, she likes English, even though she doesn't understand it.

### **Loun's family**

#### **Language use**

During my interview with Loun (4.13.92) she showed me the big Huffman English-Khmer dictionary she used to help her with her homework. The cover was wrapped entirely in duct tape. It looked very well used. She said she brought it from Cambodia, "before Pol Pot." It is the same edition as the dictionaries owned by Nop, Bopha, and Saram.

I asked Loun about what she read during the day. "I read, you know, when I come back from school. I read about the, the...you gave to me. I find in dictionary - let me show you." She showed me the homework for our class. She associates 'reading' only with the idea of doing homework for me. When I asked her if she read anything in Khmer (newspapers, books) she said, "I just learn maybe one or two years in Pol Pot camp. Yeah." As with my earlier question about English, 'reading' seemed to mean 'study' to her. She hadn't read anything in Khmer since she last studied it, in the camp.

Loun watches TV everyday, especially 'Action News.' And on the weekend she watches 'about American stories.' I asked her if she rented movies and she said "sometimes, not much," only three or four times a month. She said she watches "Cambodian movies, Chinese movies, Indian movies," all dubbed into Cambodian. I asked her if her children liked to watch the Cambodian-dubbed movies she likes, and she said "they don't like. They like just American [TV]." She described a popular sitcom they like.

Loun's children studied Khmer at her cousin's house on Saturdays and at the Korean church on Sundays. She said the teacher was Cambodian. During the interview I picked up two Khmer textbooks the children used from her coffee table and began flipping through them. Inside the books were the names of Loun's two eldest daughters. The books were all in Khmer, organized like the book I use to study Khmer. They taught the letters of the Khmer alphabet in the traditional order and associated each one with a picture that looked like the letter - a fish hook, a cane, a leaf. Loun told me only her three oldest children studied Khmer. Later in the interview I asked Loun if they knew the whole alphabet and could read a story. She said "Not yet."

Loun helps her children learn to read Khmer by helping them with their homework exercises. She said she helped them "everyday, everytime, usually." Loun had only told me the three oldest children were studying Khmer, so I asked her if the younger three would study Khmer in the future. "Yes. But they, when they 11 or 10 years old, I let them study Cambodian. But not too much, you know. Just a little bit, on Saturday and Sunday." Though not as opposed to developing her children's Khmer literacy as Bopha, Loun does perceive a limit to what would be good for them.

I asked Loun if her children spoke Khmer at home, and she said "Yeah, just my husband and me speak Cambodian a lot, but my kids, they speak in English to, her [brother] or her sister, more than Khmer." The children spoke more English to each other than Khmer. When one child began taking some grapes from the table in front of us, I asked Loun what a child said when they asked for a grape. She said "They sometimes they ask for English word, sometime Cambodian word."

### **Approaches to language**

Loun also taught her children how to speak polite (formal) Khmer (this is what Bopha felt people looked down on her for not doing). Loun told me "I let them study, but sometime they ... want to know about Cambodian story." And she added, "But I say, I don't want to tell you, you have to try more, if you have to learn more you will know." Loun wanted the children to try to read the stories on their own, to work at it. 'To study' meant to work hard, which causes learning, which leads to knowledge. She repeated, "They want me to tell them. My oldest son, he want to know about in the stories, and I say 'I don't want to tell you, when you learn more you will know.'" This

idea was important to her, that the children's knowledge had to come from their own hard study, and could not be given to them by her.

### Language attitudes

I asked Loun if her children like studying Khmer, and she said, "No. They say, 'English easy than Khmer.'" She said, "They say 'hard! Hard study.'" I asked her if her children *wanted* to study Khmer, and she said, "Yeah, I want, but yeah, they want to study too, but they say hard, so hard." This concern with the difficulty of learning Khmer is a common one in the Cambodian community (cf. Smith-Hefner, 1990). I asked her how that made her feel, and she answered, "I feel OK."

Loun encourages her children to study hard, telling me, "if you learn, and you know more English, you know more in Cambodian, in Khmer words, you have a good job. I mean when you lazy, you don't want to study a lot, you have a hard work, you know." She associated bilingualism, and a knowledge of Cambodian, with getting a 'good job.' If the children don't study hard (study both Khmer and English), they get a 'hard job.'

I asked Loun if she wanted her children to speak more Cambodian. "Yeah, I want them to speak more Cambodian and more English. I, yeah, both." But she lamented, "they speak a lot in English, they don't know Cambodian word." She privileges bilingualism, recognizing the interdependence of Cambodian and English, and is doing everything she can to ensure the development of her children's complexes of language competencies.<sup>3</sup>

### Patterns of language and literacy use and attitudes

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<sup>3</sup>Loun's oldest son recently came in first place in a city-wide spelling contest.

In order to complement my specific description of language and literacy use and attitudes within families, I will present in this section the results of some quantitative analyses of language and literacy use as revealed in my interview and observational data. Patterns discernible in the qualitative data presented above will be outlined to contextualize the quantitative data.

Firstly, it is interesting to look at the relative amounts of oral and written language use in families' native and second languages. Bopha, Loun, Bantu, and Lian all claim that their children speak more English than their L1. The children I interviewed reiterate this point, that they speak more English, especially with each other. Nop's children seem to be the only exception to this pattern, as he says his family only speaks Cambodian at home. Along with the dominance of English over participants' first languages, there is also a dominance of oral over written language use. Tran was only interested in learning spoken Chinese. Chanta says she would do her homework but she can't write. Saram's home was almost entirely devoid of printed material. These trends can be seen in figure 4.1 below.

I coded my observation notes from the six months of home visits in 1993 according to which linguistic channels and instruments were drawn upon for each language/literacy event that I had isolated. Many events drew on multiple channels and instruments. I added up the total number of occurrences of each channel and instrument, producing the figure below:



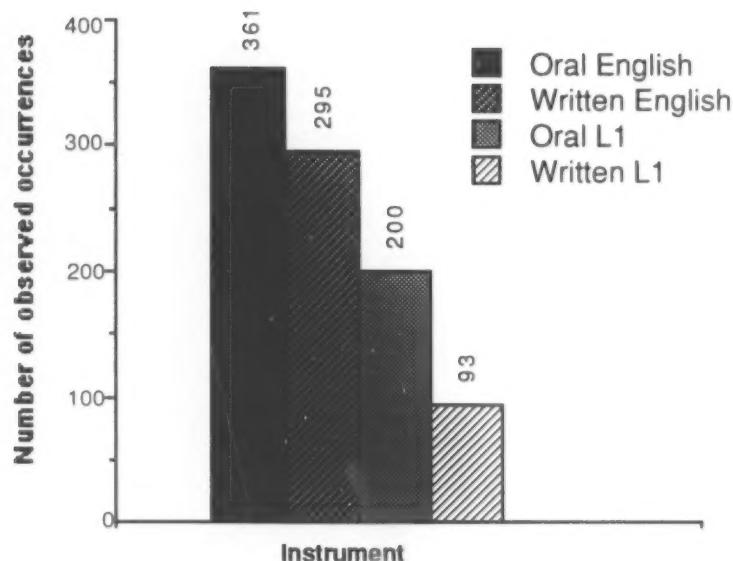


**Figure 4.1:** *Use of various linguistic instruments*

The above figure reveals: 1) the dominant use (in frequency) of English over a native language, and 2) the dominant use of oral over written language. One could argue that since these were the instruments I observed during my visits, there would of course be a preponderance of English. However, part of the purpose of my visits was to actively instigate both native language use and literacy events. So, the fact that instances of native language literacy use were so low, *despite* my efforts, is remarkable. The English language permeates even the lives of non-English-speaking families, while there are few domains for the display of native-language literacy.

An analysis of the data from interviews with parents and children reveals some further aspects of bilingualism/biliteracy in this community (see figures 4.2 and 4.3 below). One aspect of bilingualism in the home is that children frequently translate for parents. Saram's sons mention doing this. This is an example of how adults and children are typically successful when

working together to complete some linguistic task. Lian demonstrates this when she gets her son to help her express herself during her interview.

Another aspect of the bilingual world in which adults and children live is the trouble they have in it. Adults seem to have trouble when they are alone and have to complete some task involving written English. This is why Chanta cannot do her homework, and neither can Lian without her children's help. Nop could not create the translation of the news article he was working on without my help. Similarly, the children seem to have trouble when they are alone and have to complete some task involving writing in their native language. Saram's sons and Lian's son Tran express no interest in learning to write their native language. Loun's and Saram's children see it as too hard. These trends can be seen in figure 4.2 below.

I coded data from my interviews with parents and children according to type of language activity, linguistic instruments used, and success or lack of success of the activity. "Type of activity" includes participants, site, and the form and content of a communicative event. "Instruments used" were various combinations of oral and written English and Khmer. Most communicative acts were also coded, when possible, according to whether or not they were successful in the participants' eyes. These results were roughly tabulated to show relative numbers of types of language activity. The following figure addresses the participants in the activities. Other information related to activity type (site, form and content of the event) are discussed in chapters five and six.

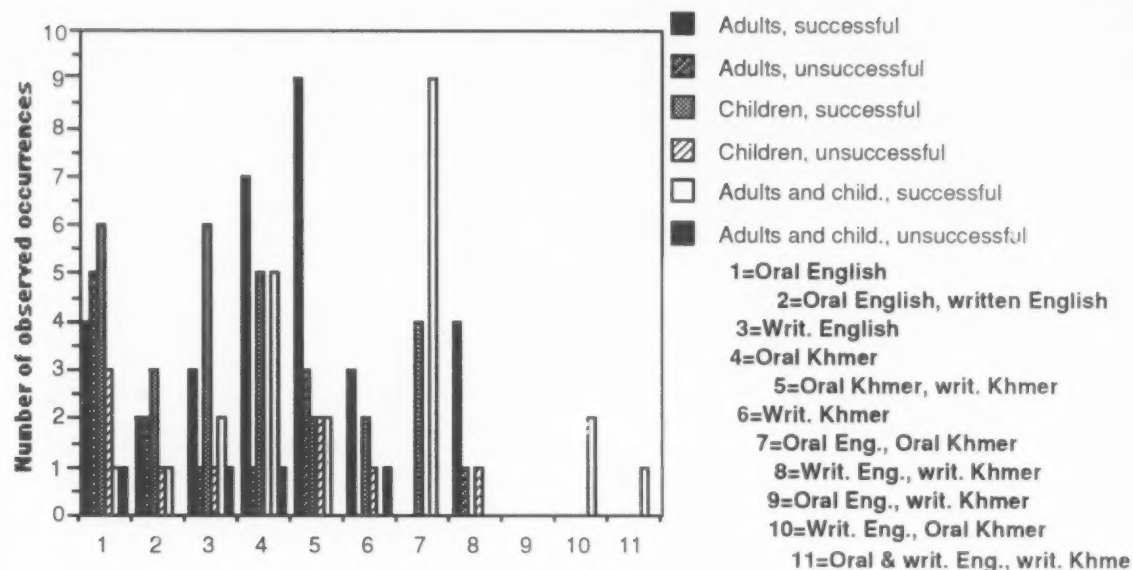


Figure 4.2: Adults and children during literacy activity

Figure 4.2 breaks down the number of occurrences of different types of communicative activity according to participants (parents, children, or both) and whether it was successful or not. I am not arguing that the combination of competencies alone led to success or not, as the context (domain) in which competencies are used (home, school, play) also has a great deal to do with whether or not the event is successful.

Some general observations can be made from this. A quick glance reveals two large 'spikes:' adults successfully using oral Khmer and written Khmer, and adults and children together successfully using oral Khmer and oral English. The first is mostly related to positive evaluations by adults of experiences when younger in Cambodia at school and work. The second refers mostly to children translating for parents, a frequent participant structure in the family. Across the board, instances of adults and children

engaged in an unsuccessful task are low (0 or 1). The number of instances of adults and children engaged in any tasks involving written Khmer is *very* low. There are *none* in categories 6, 8, and 9, all of which utilized written Khmer. This is a striking difference when compared with category 7, which shows how successful adults and children are using oral English and oral Khmer.

So it seems that when adults and children are working together, they are able to successfully complete linguistic tasks. However, when adults are alone, written English gives them trouble, just as children have trouble with any task involving written Khmer. Next, it is helpful to see what happens when the numbers are teased apart to see how successful collaborative events are compared with individual ones.

In my observations and interviews I found almost no evidence of successful collaborative events with written Khmer and English. Such collaboration would bring parents and children together during a biliterate event, similar to their success at oral translation-type events. However, these events didn't happen. When there seemed to be an opportunity, such as when Bopha was working on the Khmer song, there was conflict between her and her son rather than collaboration. Figure 4.3 below echos this trend.

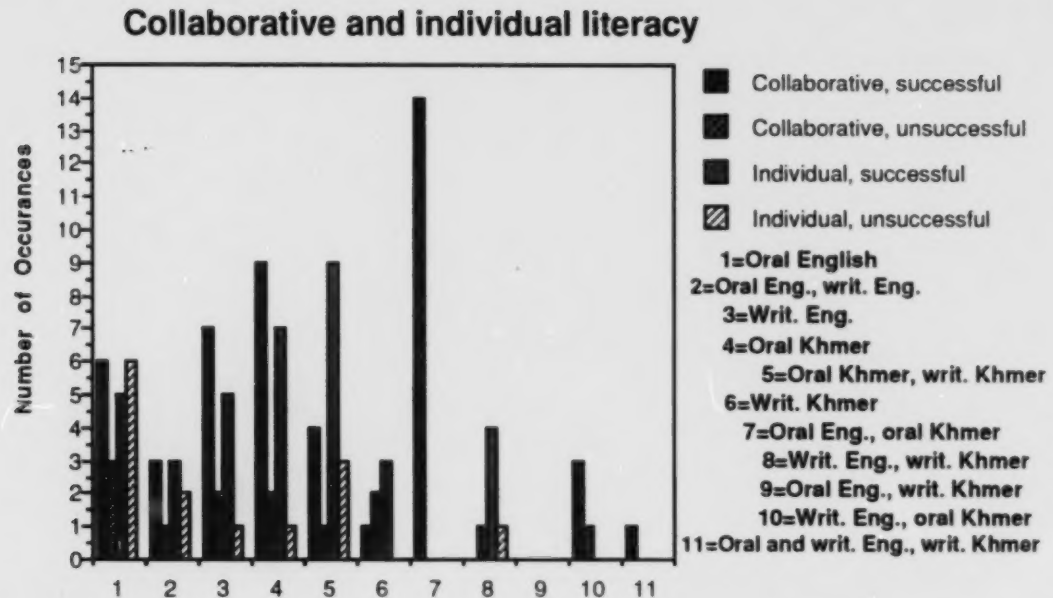


**Figure 4.3:** *Collaborative and individual literacy*

Figure 4.3 shows the results of tabulating the number of occurrences of collaborative and individual literacy events, and whether or not they were successful. The following observations can be made:

- The single highest 'spike' is for collaborative events involving oral English and oral Khmer, e.g. translation. In the next chapter I discuss translation as an act performed by children to facilitate their parents' successful completion of literacy tasks.
- Individual use of oral English is one of the only categories which is more often unsuccessful than successful, indicating the trouble parents in this community continue to have coping with life in the US without the aid of their children or other adults.
- Generally, there are more examples of successful collaborative events than successful individual events.

- There were *no* reported occurrences of collaborative, successful events involving written English with written Khmer, or oral English with written Khmer.

It seems that collaboration allows adults and children to successfully complete tasks by drawing on more than one linguistic channel, *except for written Khmer*. This could be seen as support for an argument that written Khmer is therefore not an aid for successful completion of communicative tasks. However, it could also be argued that the lack of competency in written Khmer on the part of children and the lack of domains for its use has led to unsuccessful completion of events which otherwise would be successful. Because written Khmer is not in the children's complex of language competencies, it cannot be drawn on as an auxiliary channel to complete communicative tasks.

### Discussion

Adults and children are generally successful when working together, but they have trouble with certain literacy tasks. "Trouble" is perhaps not the right word - certain activities just don't happen. The infrequency with which children are engaged with their parents in literacy tasks which involve written Khmer or Chinese is an indicator of how children may see no point to it, an issue raised later in chapter six. If language attitudes are formed by language use, then it is clear how the children's attitudes toward native language literacy may be formed by never having an opportunity to use it. Figure 4.4 below shows how children may link *all* literacy development, including native language literacy development, with 'schooling,' and not with ethnic identity or home culture:



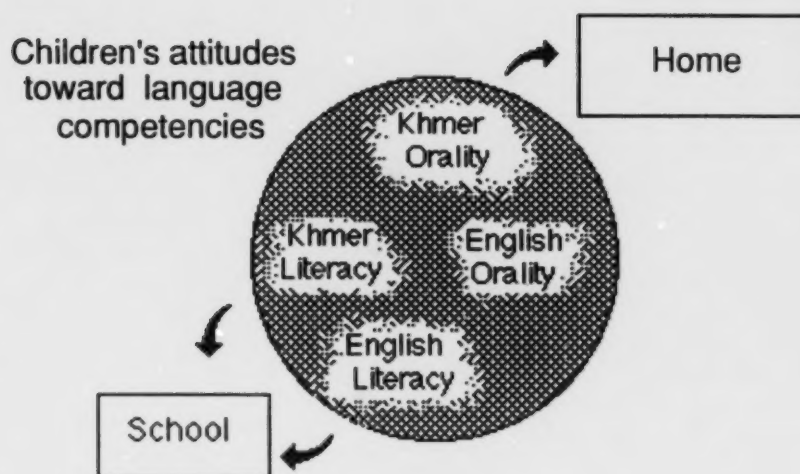


**Figure 4.4:** *Children's attitudes toward language competencies*

As we have seen, some parents definitely viewed native language literacy practice for their children as just so much extra schooling. Bopha and Loun both refer to this, not wanting to overwork their children and giving priority to English literacy development. The association of Khmer and Chinese literacy with schooling may explain why I have almost never observed children interested in their parents' native language literacy competencies, while they were very interested in their parents' English literacy competency. Parents and children have developed skills for the successful collaborative completion of school-related tasks. Possibly, because there is no room for native language literacy in the children's school, there is no room for it anywhere in their lives.

What is the relationship between the patterns of language use and attitudes, the types of acts displayed during literacy events, and the maintenance or change of language, literacy and culture in this community?

Despite avowals to the contrary by the parents in this community, linguistic and cultural maintenance are not being vigorously pursued by many of them. Cultural change and fusion in the community is the norm. I have shown above how many parents in this community regret their children's lack of competency in their native language. Yet they don't do much about it, despite the fact that with me they can display a coherent approach to language development. After one more generation many of the 'overt' aspects of traditional Cambodian and Chinese culture (religion, folklore, games, food, dress etc.) could be gone. However, more 'invisible' aspects of culture (language attitudes, learning behavior) may persist.

Within a certain community, what is the relationship between language maintenance and change and cultural maintenance and change? What is going on when one of the only examples of regular use of native language literacy is to read the Book of Mormon in Khmer everyday? And how can a parent insist on English-only education for their children at public school yet at the same time strongly desire them to be literate in her native language? What, really, is the relationship between language and culture in this community?

As argued earlier in this chapter, there may be a relationship in these families between efforts at first language maintenance and a tolerance of cultural pluralism. The relationship can be seen in Bopha's and Bantu's dependence on Khmer literacy to mediate a religious conversion. They have been able to construct a linguistic domain of use for Khmer literacy in their lives, a necessary condition for language maintenance, through the acceptance of a new religious doctrine. Nop and Lian have both been able to appropriate aspects of English literacy and integrate them with other language competencies, Nop by creating a bilingual news document and Lian by using

Chinese musical/lyrical skills to communicate a text written in English. Both Lian and Loun recognize the continuing importance of maintaining native language competencies, by sending their children to L1 schools, while also stressing success in English schooling.

Cultural change is a given; cultures are not static. Street's (1991) declaration that 'culture is a verb' is one way of viewing this changeability. When Cambodian children play in the street with African-American children the rules of jumping rope change. Cambodian parents begin to dip bread into their stews instead of pouring it over rice. They appropriate new materials and processes. Related to changes in language use, there is also an argument to be made that immigrants appropriate new linguistic materials and processes into their repertoire of competencies for constructing their lives.

My final interpretive research question regarding the relationship between the language/literacy use and attitudes, and the maintenance or change of language, literacy and culture cannot be fully answered without addressing the issue of who is in control of culture and language change in this community. To what degree are community members 'appropriating' the new materials and processes and to what extent are they being forced upon them? These variations on my final interpretive research question will be taken up in chapter seven.

## **Chapter Five**

### **Parents in school**

This chapter and the next take up my third research question, what does literacy development look like in a Cambodian community? This chapter focuses primarily on adults' literacy development, while chapter six looks at children's literacy development. Using the adult ESL classroom as context, I describe: 1) how the Cambodian adults, literate in Khmer, participate in each other's English literacy development; 2) how Cambodian children, fluent though not typically literate in Khmer, participate in their parents' development of English literacy; and 3) how a Cambodian teacher participates in his students' development of English literacy. By 'participate' I mean the ways in which the students, their children, and the teacher utilize their various complexes of biliteracy competencies to help each other complete classroom literacy tasks.

In the descriptions that follow, I am specifically interested in what types of acts (communicative and functional) adults display during tasks related to English literacy development (research question 3a), how they are engaged with each other's literacy development (research questions 3c and 5), and the role of the native language in their development of English oral and literate competencies (research question 6).

This chapter cuts across a number of research questions which are relevant to the classroom as a domain of language use. In the descriptions that follow, I am specifically interested in what types of acts (communicative and functional) adults display during tasks related to English literacy

development (research question 3a), and how they are engaged with each other's literacy development (research questions 3c and 5). To answer these questions I will look at how the participants draw on multiple linguistic competencies to help each other accomplish classroom tasks.

I will also examine the role of the native language in their development of English oral and literate competencies in the classroom (research question 6). As part of this question I am interested in what type of space is created by participants (students, teachers, children) for the use of students' native languages. In chapter seven I will look at another aspect of this question from a wider perspective, which will lead to my final interpretive question about the relationship between patterns of language use and attitudes (here in the domain of the classroom) and the maintenance of native language and literacy (by preserving a domain of use in the classroom).

### **Setting and participants**

The SACA classrooms were in the heart of an urban Cambodian community. On the same block as the school was a Cambodian grocery store, a laundromat run by Cambodians, and the apartments of many of the students. The classrooms were two blocks from the elementary school where many of the students' children went to school. The flow of students and their children in and out of the classrooms, on their way home, on their way back from school, on their way to or from the store, was constant. But the classrooms were not only tied physically into the Cambodian community. The activity in the classes to varying degrees reflected socio-culturally patterned activity in homes and schools and responded to the needs and goals of the community.

The classes I observed were taught by either myself or one of two Cambodian teachers. My roles as teacher were both similar to and different from the roles assumed by the adults and children in my class. Fundamentally, my lack of knowledge of Khmer combined with the powers of a teacher led me to participate differently as a helper and as a resource. My actions entailed relying upon others for their Khmer ability, directing literate activities, explaining, modeling, correcting, checking, and prompting. As an active 'knower' in the classroom I explained linguistic and cultural issues, and corrected and checked the students' work. These are acts typically associated with teachers. I explained rules of grammar, the meanings of words, and unfamiliar aspects of American society. As students worked, I would move around checking progress and correcting mistakes. As teacher I was also a passive resource in the classroom. I was used by the students as a 'font of knowledge,' and they used my oral and written English production as a model. Students would ask me what words mean, how to spell them, or how to pronounce them. On one occasion a student wrote down my pronunciation in Khmer script, combining my oral English competency with her written Khmer competency to help her accomplish the task of learning how to say an English word (2.11.91). They read their written work back to me to solicit my approval. My actions as 'English model' were both passive and active. They were passive when the students took the initiative to copy my writing or asked for repeat-reading practice. The following example demonstrates how students used me as a model:

3.29.91; 4:15

Loun asks, "can I copy?" about my examples on the board of deny, explain, describe, etc. I ask her if she wants to. She says yes, "I want to copy to study many times. When I don't study many times I don't remember." Saram copies too, though she is not as enthusiastic as Loun.



Of the two different Cambodian teachers I observed teaching English to adult Cambodians, I focus here on one, a 30-year-old man named Hoeun. Hoeun was educated in Cambodia and Vietnam, where he received a graduate degree in Buddhist studies. His first years in the U.S. he spent as a monk in a temple in Philadelphia, where he learned English. Much of what I observed him doing was similar to what I observed a younger Cambodian woman doing the preceding year, and both observations confirm what I have heard and read about traditional Cambodian teaching. When comparing Cambodian to American schooling, the director of SACA talked about how strict education is in Cambodia, and how stern the teachers are there (intvw., 7.27.90). My own students supported this (see interview data presented at then end of this chapter). So I believe that what I observed in Hoeun's classroom was to a certain degree representative of norms of a 'Cambodian' approach to literacy instruction in a school setting (more on this later).

When Hoeun came in to teach in the fall of 1990, he brought a room-full of students with him. Most of them I had never seen before, and were at a lower English level and a little older than the students in my class. During the year, attendance was consistently higher than in my class, at about 10-15 students a day (I had about 5 students a day). Though his students often brought young children with them to be baby-sat, and were often visited by older children who came to check in and/or get keys on their way home from school, the students did not use their older children as 'aides' during class as my students did. Hoeun used various materials and ESL textbooks. At the end of most days his chalk board would be full of Khmer writing.

The students in both of our classes were mostly Cambodian women (or Chinese-Cambodian, as in the case of Lian) between the ages of 20 and 40 who

were mothers of elementary-school aged children. They all lived within three or four blocks of the school. All the students who I knew were on some form of public assistance, though most had experience in the U.S. with seasonal or piece-meal labor. Most students that I knew had grown up in rural areas of western Cambodia, in farming families. Most of them had only two or three years of schooling as children in Cambodia, though some had further education in refugee camps in Thailand. They attended school now for a variety of reasons, such as pressure from their welfare case worker, or the desire to help their children with school work, or the hope of getting a job. For more description of some of the students, see the section on participants at the end of chapter three.

During one year of teaching and observing in SACA's ESL/ABE class I took fieldnotes during and after class focusing on what the students, children, and teachers said and did to accomplish classroom tasks. After cataloguing the notes, I grouped similar types of interactive structures together and developed the typology in figure 5.1 below outlining the behavior of adults working with each other, adults with their children, and adults with their teacher. Each element of this typology will be described and exemplified in the three sections with follow.

### **Adults working together**

I discovered two broad types of interactive structures for adults working together. They participated in each other's development of English literacy by being active or passive 'knowers-resources' for each other, and by giving or getting assistance with the process of study (see figure5.1). These two types of acts are described below.

| Adults working together        | Adults working with children                           | Adults working with a Cambodian teacher                                              |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| be a knower-resource<br>assist | give answers<br>translate/explain<br>correct<br>prompt | be authority<br>model<br>be a knower<br>translate/explain<br>check/correct<br>prompt |

**Figure 5.1:** *Acts displayed by participants in class*

Adults were often 'knower-resources' for each other. By 'knower-resource' I mean a set of acts a student could perform for other students based on their biliteracy competencies in English and Khmer. These resources could be accessed by the student themselves, by actively performing some task or volunteering aid, or could be accessed by others seeking help. As active resources, students could: 1) give each other answers, 2) share information from the dictionary, and 3) discuss class activities in Khmer. As passive resources they: 1) answered questions asked in Khmer, and 2) allowed their work to serve as models which could be copied or checked. These different acts are outlined below.

As active resources, students gave answers to each other while working on things like cross-word puzzles or grammar exercises, and prompted when other students were reading aloud. Once a student hadn't completed a crossword puzzle for homework so another student finished it for her by copying the rest of the answers from her own puzzle (1.15.91). Another time a student was having a problem on an exercise and asked a friend for help. The other friend just told her the correct answer to write down (6.12.91).

Whenever a student read aloud from some text, the students around them would prompt them at every pause.

A well-thumbed Khmer-English dictionary was a fixture of the classroom. Typically I would point to some translation in the book, and the student I showed it to would be responsible for disseminating the information. The following is an example from my fieldnotes of such activity:

5.13.91; 3:22

I was trying to teach 'certainly' to Loun, so I point it out in the Khmer-English dictionary, and she takes it from me to copy in her book. Saram has just sat down next to her, so they discuss it in Khmer. Loun looks up 'probably' and 'maybe' on her own.

The students commonly discussed class activities in Khmer, explaining to each other things I had said or work I had assigned. For example, after I would talk about some point of English grammar, the students would talk in Khmer to make sure they all understood what I had said (5.15.91). Also, while students worked they would talk with each other about the context of what they were doing, as the following example shows:

4.8.91; 3:13

Saram sits and opens up the notebook and works on the handout in her lap so I can't see it from where I sit. She is working on last night's homework. After Loun comes in she looks at what Saram is doing, and they chat in Khmer. Loun erases something from her homework. Saram asks Loun something about the homework in Khmer. Loun points to some words in the textbook with her pencil.

As passive resources, students would answer questions from other students and allow their work to be used as a model for copying or checking answers. Once while the students were writing stories, one asked another in Khmer about how to put 'ask' into past tense (1.24.91), and the student spelled the answer for her. After a student's work was finished, it typically became a 'communal resource.' One day I told a student that her homework was well

done, and another student said, "OK, maybe I'll copy" (3.21.91). They also automatically checked each other's work once they had finished a common task, as the following example shows:

3.15.91; 3:40

The students are working on completing sentences. Bopha stops for a minute saying she can't do it. I get her going again. The students work quietly and separately. Loun finishes first, and I ask her if I can check, but she says "let me check" and then she checks her own work. At 3:45 I ask if everyone is finished. Loun says, "No not yet teacher." Saram, who has finished, leans over and checks Loun's paper.

Adults also performed a number of actions to assist each other in keeping up with the process of classroom activity, the flow of teacher-directed tasks. Primarily this involved translating directions from me or from the textbook, or explaining to each other in Khmer what they were supposed to be doing. If one student didn't know where we were in the book, or how to follow the directions for a specific exercise, another student would show them. Certain students would act as translators for other students to facilitate understanding between students with lower English competencies and myself.

For example, a student with a high competency in listening to English once sat next to a student without such competency and explained to her everything I said. After I had talked about 'punctuation' she translated this word and wrote on the other student's paper something that looked like a 'y.' I asked what this was and was told it was a Khmer punctuation mark. The student was drawing on her competencies in oral and written English, and oral and written Khmer, to help another student keep up with the progression of my lesson (5.12.91).

The students performed certain acts which drew on different language competencies to push along each other's development of English literacy.

These active and passive acts framed interaction during literacy events. Next, a similar set of acts are presented which frame how children participated in their parents' development of English literacy.

### **Adults working with children**

At least once or twice a week one of my students brought their children to class with them. If the children were of pre-school age, they seemed to be there only to be baby-sat. If they were in elementary school, they helped their parents and/or worked on their own homework. Below is a description of how these elementary school-aged children participated in their parents' development of English literacy. Children's interactions with their parents in the latter's literacy development were marked by norms corresponding to the types of acts listed in figure 5.1.

When studying, parents used their children as knowers of English, as 'those who can give the right answers.' This took place both in my classroom and in my students' homes, according to their own descriptions of how their children helped them with their homework (also see chapter six which describes literate activity in students' homes). At home, the children were regularly involved with helping their parents do their homework. One man often worked ahead at home on our handouts. He said his son helped him (1.29.91). The work was always much better than what he could do in class. Another student had once done a good job on an assignment that involved reading a letter written in cursive. She told me her "number one son" had helped her because "he knows cursive" (6.26.91).

In the classroom, the children also gave answers to their parents working on literacy tasks. The children would usually sit next to their parents and lean in over the work they were doing and tell them what to



write. The following two examples from my field notes show what this was typically like:

3.1.91; 3:20

Loun's daughters (7 and 9 years old) are sitting on either side of her, leaning in and watching everything she does. She is trying to write a recipe. She asks her daughters to spell 'whole' and 'chicken.' They check her work, and give her answers. They seem exasperated with her slow progress as she writes.

6.25.91; 4:14

The students are working on an exercise. Loun's children are sitting on either side of her, feeding her answers when they know them. Bopha's oldest daughter is helping her, watching over her work. At first no one helps Saram. Later Loun's daughter starts to look over Saram's work, giving her answers. Loun's daughter is sitting between Saram and Loun.

Children acted as translators and explainers for their parents during class. During class the children took it upon themselves to translate my explanations for their parents. This usually happened when the parent indicated to their child that they had not understood something I had said:

3.25.91; 3:17

Loun and her older son (about 10 years old) arrive. He sits quietly next to her, occasionally whispering answers to her when I ask her a question. He sometimes translates my explanations to her, and just to her, while pointing at her handout. He doesn't seem to have any other purpose to being here other than to help Loun. He has no work of his own to do. He was carrying a notebook when he walked in, but it was Loun's.

The children also explained written instructions to their parents, drawing on their competency in written English as well as oral English. On the last day of class I gave the students a kind of test (6.26.91). Their children immediately helped them. At the beginning one student nearly surrendered her test to her children to read over. They pulled the test away from her and she sat quietly waiting for them to finish looking through it, before they gave it back, telling her what to do with it.

Children corrected their parents' mistakes in class. The children sometimes seemed to take a certain kind of pleasure in doing this. This behavior was usually welcomed by the parents, although it had its limits. When one student was writing in her notebook, her son pointed all over a page saying in English, "this wrong, this wrong, this should be an 's'" (2.28.91). Later, when he tried to look in her book again, she hid it from him.

When the students read something out loud, their children would read along, correcting and prompting. Prompting drew on the children's competencies in both written and oral English:

3.11.91; 3:50

When the class is reading aloud together, Loun's daughters read along too. When Loun is reading one part of a conversation, her daughters read along and prompt her when she pauses.

The acts the children displayed in the classroom drew on their specific complex of biliteracy competencies which made them different from any of the students and different from myself, the teacher.

### **Adults working with a Cambodian teacher**

The teacher-student relationship in Hoeun's classroom was very different from mine. He exercised a certain type of power over his students that I did not. His acts as teacher were very active/authoritative, while the students' acts were very passive. I will first describe his acts, and the biliteracy competencies they relied on, and then those of his students. Evidence in support of my description of roles will be pulled from one day's intensive focused observation. Figure 5.1 lists the act-repertoire Hoeun displayed.

Hoeun's role as teacher is a position marked by formalistic behavior involving himself as central authority. Hoeun began each class by calling out

'OK!' a number of times, to signal to the students that they should be quiet, get in their seats, and get ready to work. He seemed to begin most classes by going around to check work he had assigned the day before. When Hoeun checked their work or asked a specific student a question, he stood right in front of their desks and looked down at them from about a foot away:

2.25.91; 3:17

Hoeun begins to try and get class going. "OK," he says loudly, and then walks out of the room for a second. He then comes back and picks up a clip-board with a few sheets of paper on it. He says "OK!" again and wipes off the chalk board. One student who was standing up sits down. He says "OK" again and walks up to each student, standing in front of them leaning over their desks, to check if they have done homework ("What's that?!" he says to one student). He is very stern. He seems to begin and end almost all his sentences, even those in Khmer, with "OK."

Literate activity in Hoeun's classroom involved imitation, modeling, and 'being given the right answer' (more so than in my classroom). Often he did not hand out materials but wrote passages on the board which all students copied and which became the subject of lessons. Described below is one such copying activity:

2.25.91; 3:25

Hoeun writes on the board, copying from a sheet of paper on his clip-board:

Winters are cold in Pennsylvania.  
It rains in the winter.  
It snows in the winter.  
Summers are hot in Pennsylvania.  
It does not snow in the summer.  
It is sunny in the summer.  
In winter you can ski.  
In winter you can ice skate.  
In spring you can see baby birds.  
In summer you can go swimming.  
In fall you  
can pick apples.

As Hoeun writes on the board, some students slowly sound out what he writes, speaking at the same speed as he writes. He works very quietly and slowly, with his back to the students. The students get quieter and quieter as they all get into copying the board. He puts the chalk down when he is finished writing on the board and silently strolls around the class with his hands clasped behind his back, reading aloud what he has written on the board. The students are busy copying.

Copying was central to Hoeun's teaching method. He described its purpose to me in two ways (intvw. 3/17/92). First he said it was necessary when multiple copies of textbooks or photo-copiers were unavailable (existing conditions in traditional Cambodian schooling). But also, and more relevant to its use here (where there were textbooks and photo-copiers available), Hoeun said "The reason I want the students to copy from the board what I had wrote on the board because I want them to be practicing *writing* [miming the writing movements with his hand]. Because, the character in Cambodian is totally and completely different from English." And he went on, "I want them to practice writing and also want them to learn the spelling. OK? Because I want them to learn *everything* at the same time. Read, and then write, and then spelling, and also *feel* the hand [again pantomimes writing movements]. That's what I want."

Hoeun performed acts as a 'knower-resource' in much the same way I did in my classroom. Students asked him about the pronunciation and meaning of words. Occasionally during the year the students asked for his assistance with understanding bills, letters from school, etc. Also like me, Hoeun was an 'explainer' of the English language. Unlike myself, however, he could do his explaining in English and/or Khmer. He typically did both:

2.25.91; 3:55

Hoeun asks the class as a whole, "How many seasons in a year?" There is no answer. He underlines 'winter,' 'summer,' 'spring,' and 'fall' which are written on the board. While going over the seasons, he keeps

switching between questions and directions in English, and explanations in Khmer. He seems to translate the names of the seasons into Khmer.

This type of action extended beyond classroom concerns. Once a woman showed Hoeun a form she had to fill out and he tried explaining it to her in Khmer (2.25.91). Also, his explanations often included the use of written Khmer to give the translations of words and sentences.

A central type of action performed by Hoeun (and the other Cambodian teacher I observed the year before) was to correct the writing (copying) of students. As students copied from the board, he walked around the room pointing out mistakes they made:

2.25.91; 3:35

The students are copying the board. Hoeun says to the only man in his class, "OK, ski, s-k-i, you missed." He says to a woman, "Skate, ice skate." Then there are about two minutes of silence. He says to Soeun, an older woman, "OK, xxx, OK," while correcting something on her paper about "winter." He walks around to check how students are doing. He tells a student in English about leaving space between sentences, then he says it in Khmer.

He also checked students' ability to read what they copied by pushing them to read aloud:

2.25.91; 3:50

Hoeun asks the class as a whole, "OK finish?" There is no response, as everyone is still busy copying the board. He asks one woman, "You finish? Can you read?" He works individually with her for a minute. She reads to him, very slowly, word by word, from her paper. He keeps pushing her on whenever she stops reading, pointing at her paper and asking "how do you say?"

When students read aloud, Hoeun would prompt them toward successful completion of the task. Students with a very low reading competency were expected to try and read a passage aloud even if they had to be prompted every other word or so:

2.25.91; 4:00

Hoeun asks his students, "Can you read it, Can you read?" going from student to student, referring to the text on the board. Everyone shakes their head. He tries to get one younger woman to read. She laughs, then begins to read from the board (not from her paper). Hoeun corrects, prompts, and praises as she reads. Other students also prompt and quietly read along. She reads very slowly until the end of the text on the board. Then without pause or direction, the woman next to her begins reading from the board, and the same routine follows. The man next to her reads next, in much the same way. Each student takes about four minutes to read the 13 lines from the board.

### Discussion

There were some differences and similarities between how the adults, children, and Hoeun utilized their complexes of biliteracy competencies when participating in the adults' development of English literacy. As 'English-literate,' the children gave answers, corrected and checked work, explained problems, and prompted the adults during literate activity.

There were also differences and similarities between how the Khmer-literate students participated in each other's literacy development and how their Khmer-speaking children worked with them. They could both give answers, answer questions, correct, prompt, and translate explanations or instructions. However, the children could translate and correct *more*, because of their higher level of English.

A more distinct difference between the children and adults was the latter's Khmer-literacy. The adults could read and share information from the Khmer-English dictionary, which the children could not do. Their Khmer literacy manifested itself only in this interactive act. They *did* take notes to themselves in Khmer, but only once did I observe Khmer literacy being used by one student helping another, and that was mentioned above (5.2.91) where one woman used the Khmer punctuation mark to help explain to another woman what 'punctuation' meant.



The children's actions neatly complemented those of the teacher. Their actions as translators and explainers at times enabled the teacher to more fully perform his managerial roles. The combined act-repertoire of the teacher and the children functioned to facilitate adult English literacy activity in the classroom. Students in Hoeun's classroom mostly copied, read aloud, and asked the teacher questions. Each of these acts involves interaction with the teacher but not with each other. This teacher-student relationship was fundamental to his class.

The activity in Hoeun's classroom (his tight control, the reading aloud of long passages) matches what I have come to understand of 'Cambodian schooling.' The norms for student and teacher acts I saw in his classroom were identical to what I had observed the previous year in a class taught by a Cambodian woman. Hoeun himself told me he used his experience in school growing up to guide his own practice. The students I interviewed from our classes who had gone to school as children in Cambodia described classrooms to me that reminded me of Hoeun's class. And finally, the literature that exists on Cambodian schooling describes very similar scenes to the ones I observed.

Hoeun had no official teacher training or preparation. He told me he just used the method he learned in government and temple schools in Vietnam and Cambodia (3.17.92). He also told me his English teachers were bilingual and used the same method he used with his students. His opinion was that if it worked for him, it would work for his students. He described the temple schools as very difficult, mostly because of the text-memorization required, so that students were "able to say it without looking at the text." The association of school with the saying aloud of memorized texts was echoed by some of the students.

What students told me of their childhood educational experiences matched Hoeun's. When I asked Bantu if she had homework in school when she was little, she said something about being told 'not to look in a book.' I found out she meant she had to memorize a lot of passages in Khmer to recite in class without looking at the textbook. She had to memorize "many words." I asked Saram if the teachers in Cambodia were strict, and she answered, "Yeah, when first grade, second and third, four, the teacher strict because the children not listen to the teacher." She said the teachers hit the students because "some of the children not listen to the teacher and they talk." I asked Chanta if her parents helped her with her homework, and she said 'no!' She said she did it by herself in class. She said "Teacher tell not bring home, he scared somebody help me." They had to do the work in class, and the teacher made sure they didn't "copy from friends." My students painted a picture of schooling where the teacher exercised strict control, the students had to read aloud a lot, and couldn't work together. These qualities are similar to what I observed in Hoeun's classroom.

Needham (1991) discusses Khmer literacy instruction in a temple in a Cambodian community in Long Beach. She concludes that the instruction in these classes was similar to teaching methods used in Cambodia, "this being rote memorization and group recitation of the material" (9). She said teachers insisted on sticking to the proper way of learning in the classroom. Tambiah (1968) reports from an ethnography of traditional temple schooling in Thailand that schooling there involved reading aloud, memorization, and recitation (98-102). Smith-Hefner (1990) describes general attitudes toward teaching, learning, and parenting in the Cambodian community. She concludes at one point that "whereas parents repeatedly stressed that teachers are responsible for all aspects of teaching, they also emphasized that ultimate

responsibility for *learning* lies with the student" (260). This emphasis on teacher responsibility for administering a 'lesson,' combined with the students' responsibility to learn by working hard, could be a description of Hoeun's classroom.

It is clear that the participants in the adult Cambodians' development of English literacy, including themselves, their children, and their teacher, all had the ability to perform productive acts. They all had a special complex of biliteracy competencies, motivation, and experience with schooling which framed their participation in the classroom and at home. When one participant's complex of abilities and motivation was missing something, for example the teacher's lack of knowledge of Khmer, the acts he could perform were then limited, and it seemed logical and appropriate that other participants, e.g. Khmer-literate adults and their Khmer-speaking children, should be permitted and expected to perform those acts. This allowed the adult students to productively utilize and build on their own Khmer language/literacy background when the teacher could not.

## **Chapter Six**

### **Parents and children learning together**

#### **Introduction**

At the end of one spring ABE/ESL program, SACA had a ceremony to present certificates to the students. To prepare for the ceremony, we asked students to construct a tree on which they were to put the names of all their children. Each parent was to write the name of a child on a different leaf cut from construction paper. Three or four of the parents were unable to do this; they didn't know how to spell their children's names in the Latin alphabet. They had to tell me the names, and write them down in the Khmer script, for me to be able to write them "in English" using the Latin alphabet. They were both surprised and happy to see me do this.

Later that summer in a day camp for Southeast Asian children, I met Cambodian children who were unable to write their names using the Khmer script. They could not even recognize their names in Khmer when I wrote them as best I could. Typically they would be more interested in the curiosity of my ability to write in Khmer than in actually learning to do it themselves.

This is an extreme but telling example of how Cambodian parents and children can be seen as in worlds apart: parents cannot write their children's names in a way that their children can read. The parents can say their children's names and write them in Khmer. The children can of course understand their names and write them in English. There is a shared communicative competency (oral) while there remain separate, unshared, literate competencies.

Cambodian children in Philadelphia could be said to live in a world apart from either their parents or other "American" children.<sup>1</sup> This separate world, marked by differences in language competencies, beliefs, and behavior (i.e. culture), is not absolute and impermeable. Nor is it unchanging. It does, however, lead to observably different role systems when Cambodian children interact with their parents. They bring different competencies and "propriospects" to tasks involving the spoken and written word. Wolcott (1991:267) describes *propriospects* as "networks of sense-making connections created and constantly being reformulated by each of us out of direct experience." The linguistic competencies a Cambodian child demonstrates when interacting with other children and adults are not *acquired* in a simplistic transmission sense, but constantly reformulated. Their understanding of what to say to whom, and where, is not static but evolves as their parents learn more English, and as they learn more Khmer. Their interactions with their parents in educational scenes involving literacy are an enactment of these competencies, even as the interactions themselves reform the competencies.

This chapter will begin by looking at what types of acts children display during literacy events (research question number 3b), and then go on to investigate how the children's acts during literacy events are different from or similar to the types of acts the parents display (research question number 4). Using a case study and other observations, I will go on to answer my other main comparative research question (number 5): what are the differences

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<sup>1</sup>I use the term "American" to refer to non-Cambodians, typically white or African-American. Of course the Cambodian children are also "American," but Cambodians do not use the term this way. They typically refer to themselves as "Cambodian" and others as "American."

between how parents are engaged with each other's and their children's literacy development and how children are engaged with each other's and their parent's literacy development? Finally, I'll try to get at the role of the native language in community members' development of English competencies (research question number 6).

### **Children learning together**

I observed children working together on homework at home and in the library. In the afternoons after school the completion of homework was a central activity, and took place at home, at the public library, and at a neighborhood church-run community center. Below I will describe the types of learning scenes I saw in homes and at the library.

#### **At home**

I usually visited homes at 4:00 in the afternoon and children, if they were around, were almost invariably doing homework. At Bopha's, Lian's, and Saram's there were designated areas set up in the living space where the children did their work. At Bopha's and Lian's the entire living room seemed organized around this activity.

Children were typically disappointed when they don't have any homework. On one visit to Lian's her youngest child, Chen (7 years old) complained that his math teacher just played all the time and forgot to give any homework that day (2.2.93). At another visit to Lian's her daughter Mei complained about having no homework, because her teacher that day was a substitute (1.26.93). As with the previous incident, the whole family was engaged in complaining about such homework deprivation. Because she had no homework, Mei instead helped her younger brother with his:



1.26.93; Lian's: 4:00

Mei, Tran, and Chen are sitting together at an old formica kitchen table in the living room. Mei is helping Chen do his English homework. They are talking to each other in English. Chen has written various food-related words on pictures on a memeo-sheet. He is supposed to write a sentence for each one. The first sentence he writes is "They is milk in the refrigerator." Mei tells him this is wrong, that it should be "there" not "they." They consult Tran, who is working on math next to them. He looks at Chen's sentence and says it should be "are" not "is." They argue about this for a while. Later at dinner, after Hien comes home from the library, Mei and Tran explain to him the problem in Chen's homework and the argument continues as they tease Chen with the mistake they each think he made. Some of this dinner discussion is in Chinese.

The above episode reveals how children are obligated to help each other with work when they are available. This help can be in the form of corrections and consultations. The incident below shows how far 'helping' can go, where finishing someone's homework becomes a shared cooperative activity:

4.21.93; Bopha's; 4:00

Bopha, Lena and Leav are working at the coffee table in the living room. Jimmy is asleep on the couch next to them. I ask Lena and Leav what they are doing and they hand me a memeo which Jimmy is supposed to complete for his homework. It is a story with missing words that are supposed to be filled in. Most of them already are. They want my help with it, because Jimmy couldn't remember the rest. Lena and Leav seem to be concerned with finishing Jimmy's homework, even though they are also working on their own. They pull out more of his unfinished homework, about a story called "The Red Hen." There are some questions about the story. Jimmy continues to slumber as everyone works on his homework.

These incidents show homework to be a jointly constructed task, where all participants seem to have a vested interest in each other's success. This study strategy might be seen as a response to a situation where parents can't be directly involved in their children's school work. However, it cannot be simply a strategy developed in automatic response to low parental engagement, because there are of course many situations where parents are unable to help their children and yet the children do not help each other. There must be something about the context which allows space for this sort of collaborative activity. Caplan et al (1989: 105) found such homework activity to be a fixture of Southeast Asian homes, which they argued was the source of high achievement in school.

#### **At the library**

It became evident from my home observations that children spent a lot of time at the public library after school. To a certain extent I felt thwarted by this turn of events, because I had hoped to be able to observe children working on homework during my observations. I realized I had to do some observations at the library to find out what went on there. Most of the Cambodian families I knew lived half-way between two different branches, about six blocks from each, but most children I knew went to the same one. I decided to observe there one afternoon a week for a few weeks.

When I began my observations, two hand-written signs on the library door advertised, "We have Vietnamese books" and "We have Chinese books." Inside the library there are a half-dozen shelves of Vietnamese and Vietnamese videos and books. There is also a large language-learning section with tapes, books, and videos for teaching many languages, including

teaching English to adult learners with specific language backgrounds (Spanish, Farsi, Hindi, Vietnamese, Cambodian). I had never heard of this resource, and I have no evidence that any Cambodian I knew had ever used these books. When Southeast Asian families came in they went to the back of the library where there is the children's books section. Between the stacks are some work tables, a computer, and a librarian's desk. One of the librarian's duties is to keep adults out of this area during after-school hours, although I noticed this didn't apply to parents.

The library seems to serve a number of functions for Cambodian children. It is a resource for children looking for information which they cannot find at home. It is a place where they can get homework assistance. It is also a kind of home-away-from-home where children can enjoy a recreational print-rich environment.

In order to get help with their homework, children went to the library for the books, and for the librarians. On one occasion (1.27.93) Bopha's daughters Leav and Pech used my computer's encyclopedia to look for information they needed to answer some questions Leav had for homework. They were unable to find just what they needed. They decided to go to the library to look for the other answers, even though it was 4:15 and soon to be dark. At one of my visits to the library (5.10.93) I saw Bopha's daughter Lena looking through a shelf of fairy-tale books, looking for some particular one. Children also went to the library to get help from the librarians there. On one visit I saw a librarian giving homework help to two Southeast Asian boys and later to some girls. In my interview with Lian's son Tran, he told me about going to the library to get help with homework.

The library was also a recreational print-rich social environment for children:

4.26.93; Library; 4:00

Three Cambodian girls who were earlier using the computer in the back are now in the front of the library lazily browsing through a collection of popular CDs. They move on to looking through video tapes, talking to each other the whole time in a mixture of English and Khmer.

When Lian's son Hien came home from the library once at 6:00 I asked him what children did there with the computer (5.4.93). He told me something about collecting weapons and fighting. I had seen children the week before crowded around the computer:

4.26.93; Library; 4:00

In the children's section of the library a group of six southeast Asian girls and boys are huddled around a computer, going through what looks like a spelling/phonics program. An older Cambodian woman is sitting to the back of them, looking on.

This looks just like a type of learning scene I observed often in homes, where children cooperatively worked through some literacy task while a parent observed them but did not actively participate.

Children were very relaxed and at home in the library:

5.5.93; Bopha's; 4:00

Just before I leave Bopha's she asks me to take Jimmy and Leav to the library to meet Pech and Lena. As we are on our way Jimmy seems to be a little worried that they won't still be there. I go into the library with them, and just inside Jimmy breaks into a run when he sees Pech and Lena in the back. They all seem very comfortable and at home here. They will probably walk home together.

6.9.93; Library; 5:20

Lena and Pech left for the library at about 4:30 to do homework, without umbrellas or raincoats. At 5:20 there was a thunderstorm brewing, so I drove Bopha and Jimmy over to the library to pick up the girls. Inside the library the girls were in the back playing scrabble. Bopha said to me laughing, "They play, not work!"

### **One case study: Learning in Bopha's family**

I spent the summer and fall of 1991 visiting the home of one of my students, Bopha, to both continue tutoring her in English and begin studying Khmer. I was also interested in learning as much as possible about the kinds of literate activity that went on, who was involved, and how literacy tasks were completed (all aspects of my first descriptive research question). I found that the same types of participatory strategies were utilized by parents and children in this home as in my classroom described in chapter five. What I observed at Bopha's indicates that parents and children can draw on their different biliteracy competencies to complete literacy tasks. Figure 6.1 lists these participatory strategies, which will each be described and exemplified below.

| <b>Children working with<br/>parents</b> |
|------------------------------------------|
| be knower-resource                       |
| translate                                |
| give answers and correct                 |
| bridge competencies                      |

**Figure 6.1:** *Acts displayed by children at home*

In Bopha's home, her 12-year-old daughter Pech and her husband Ho participated in our tutoring sessions. Bopha was typically the center of attention at these times, and her husband and daughter alternately worked at helping Bopha with her work, and studying themselves. Pech especially performed actions as a 'knower-resource' and translator for her mother. The following episode shows Bopha drawing on her translation abilities to get information from me about recent news events:

8.22.91; Bopha's apt.; 2:30

Bopha asks me about recent developments in the Soviet Union, as she saw something in the news on T.V. I try to tell her what happened, about the then failed coup and the return of Gorbachev, but she has a great deal of trouble understanding, though she understands 'Soviet Union', 'coup,' and 'president.' She gives up and asks Pech, her oldest daughter, to translate for her. Pech was sitting next to Bopha reading, and turned to pay attention to me. I try to tell her about the news. She listens carefully, then turns to Bopha and translates to Khmer, though I hear her use the English words 'Soviet Union' and 'President.' Bopha gets it, and says 'Gorbachev has...' and gestures on her head to indicate something funny about it (the birthmark). I say yes, that's Gorbachev.

Parents had a strong belief in their children's English ability, to the extent that in interviews they unanimously viewed their own children as English dominant. Bopha said that her children preferred to talk with each other in English, that their Khmer wasn't very good, that they didn't know many Khmer words. She said if she asked them a question in Khmer, they would answer her mostly in English, with only a little Khmer mixed in (intvw., 1.23.92).

Based on my own observations I think the parents strongly overestimated their children's English use at home. From the summer I spent in Bopha's home and the smaller amount of time in other students' homes, it was clear the children spoke mostly in Khmer. Nevertheless, the parents' impressions that their children were English-dominant is an



indication of how they would come to rely on them as English 'knower-resources.'

Bopha's daughter Pech was always quick to give answers to and for her mother when we were studying English in their home:

8.6.91; Bopha's apt.; 2:40

We study the difference between "so do I", "so can I", and "so am I." Bopha has lots of trouble with this, and is helped by both Ho and Pech. Though I have not planned it, Bopha becomes the center of the work. When I give a prompt (a statement to be responded to), only Bopha tries to respond while Pech and Ho wait to see if she is right or wrong. If wrong, they will tell her the right response.

Ho and Pech also gave Bopha answers when she was working on some activity. In the incident below, Pech utilizes her English competency to answer for her mother, and Ho uses his reading competency to convey Pech's answers to Bopha:

8.15.91; Bopha's apt.; 2:20

After Bopha, Pech and I start going over a crossword puzzle the rest of the family come back in. Ho sits between Pech and Bopha, working with Pech on her paper. When I ask a question, Pech most often calls out an answer, which Bopha writes down. Once I ask Bopha a question when Pech is away from the table, and Ho looks on Pech's paper and reads her answer to Bopha.

These two examples show Ho and Pech playing roles similar to ones I observed in my classroom, namely, giving answers and correcting.

In homes, as they did in class, children translated for parents and parents translated for each other. Once when I was at Bopha's and I asked Ho if he wanted to read something aloud, Bopha translated the question for him and he immediately began reading, as if I had issued a directive (8.6.91).

The examples above already show how parents and children can draw on certain biliteracy competencies to help each other complete linguistic/communicative tasks. In their homes, they could develop their biliteracy competencies by building on existing competencies. In the example below,

Bopha, Pech and I can all be seen using our own special complexes of biliteracy competencies:

8.6.91; Bopha's apt.; 3:10

While studying Khmer, Bopha, Pech and I discuss the words 'forest,' 'woods,' and '*priay*' (Khmer). 'Forest' is in the text (let's have a picnic in the forest). Bopha doesn't know forest, so Pech asks me, 'like woods, right?' I say yes, it's like woods. Then Bopha translates *priay* (from the transliteration) as 'jungle.' I explain the difference between 'woods' (only trees) and 'jungle' (more wild). Bopha then confirms that the Khmer *priay* is more like jungle.

It takes my competency in the semantic nuances of the English language, Pech's translating competency, and Bopha's own semantic competency in Khmer to work through the literate task before us, questioning the use of the word 'forest' as a translation of '*priay*.'

However, though I was able to find isolated instances of the types of activity presented above, I finished the two seasons of visits to Bopha's ultimately feeling that I had not seen much of what I had hoped to: parents and children working together on literacy tasks. I had seen what was *possible*, but examples such as the one above were not numerous enough for me to see reliable patterns of interactive behavior around literacy. Such events just didn't seem to happen that often. I did not feel it would be possible to give reliable answers to my descriptive and comparative questions based on those visits. Therefore I felt it was necessary to pursue more deliberative and in-depth home visits in this community, described below.

### Families of learners

In January of 1993 I began visiting four families once a week to work on the computer. I wanted to create contexts for family literacy activities. Methodologically, I did not worry about my presence influencing the occurrence of literacy activities - I was not counting the number of literacy

acts. I was interested in how the participants interacted with each other during literacy activity, what they did when literacy activities were made possible. I used the computer as a heuristic device for getting family members to work together.

I selected from my fieldnotes all descriptions of engagement in literacy events from half a year's home observations, a total of 151 events. I organized these events under four broad categories: child-to-child, child-to-parent, parent-to-parent, and parent-to-child. In the first, children were participating in a literacy event with each other. Similarly, 'parent-to-parent' were events involving only the parents. In 'child-to-parent' the parent was the central participant in the literacy event, and in 'parent-to-child' the child was the central participant. By 'central participant' I mean the one who was supposed to benefit from the successful completion of the literacy task, or for whom the completion was most important. On occasion this distinction was problematic, but most of the time it was ascertainable. Within each broad category the literacy event was typed according to the act being performed by the person engaged in the central participant's completion of the literacy task. For example, under 'parent-to-child' the following acts were performed by the parents when they were participating in their child's successful completion of a literacy task: advise, cooperate, correct, direct, explain, give an answer, observe, orchestrate, and translate. The chart in figure 6.1 lists all the acts, with the number of times each act was observed in parentheses (no number means the act was only observed once). These acts are analogous to the ones listed in chapter four describing the adult ESL classroom. However, the set of roles is not the same.

|                                    |                                |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b><u>Children-to-children</u></b> | <b><u>Parent-to-parent</u></b> |
| advise (9)                         | compete                        |
| cooperate (20)                     | be consulted (4)               |
| compete (11)                       |                                |
| be consulted                       |                                |
| correct (3)                        |                                |
| explain                            |                                |
| observe (3)                        |                                |
| substitute (3)                     |                                |
| <b><u>Children-to-parent</u></b>   | <b><u>Parent-to-child</u></b>  |
| compete                            | advise (7)                     |
| be consulted (2)                   | cooperate (5)                  |
| cooperate (2)                      | correct (2)                    |
| direct (8)                         | direct (7)                     |
| explain (4)                        | explain                        |
| give answer (4)                    | give answer (4)                |
| observe (2)                        | observe (12)                   |
| scaffold (2)                       | orchestrate (16)               |
| substitute (8)                     | translate                      |
| translate (7)                      |                                |

**Figure 6.2:** *Acts performed by parents and children while engaged in literacy activity.*

The total list of act types is as follows: advise, be consulted, compete, cooperate, correct, direct, explain, give an answer, observe, orchestrate, scaffold, substitute and translate. Each type of act will be exemplified and discussed later in this chapter. The histogram below displays the numbers for each type of act grouped under the categories outlined above.

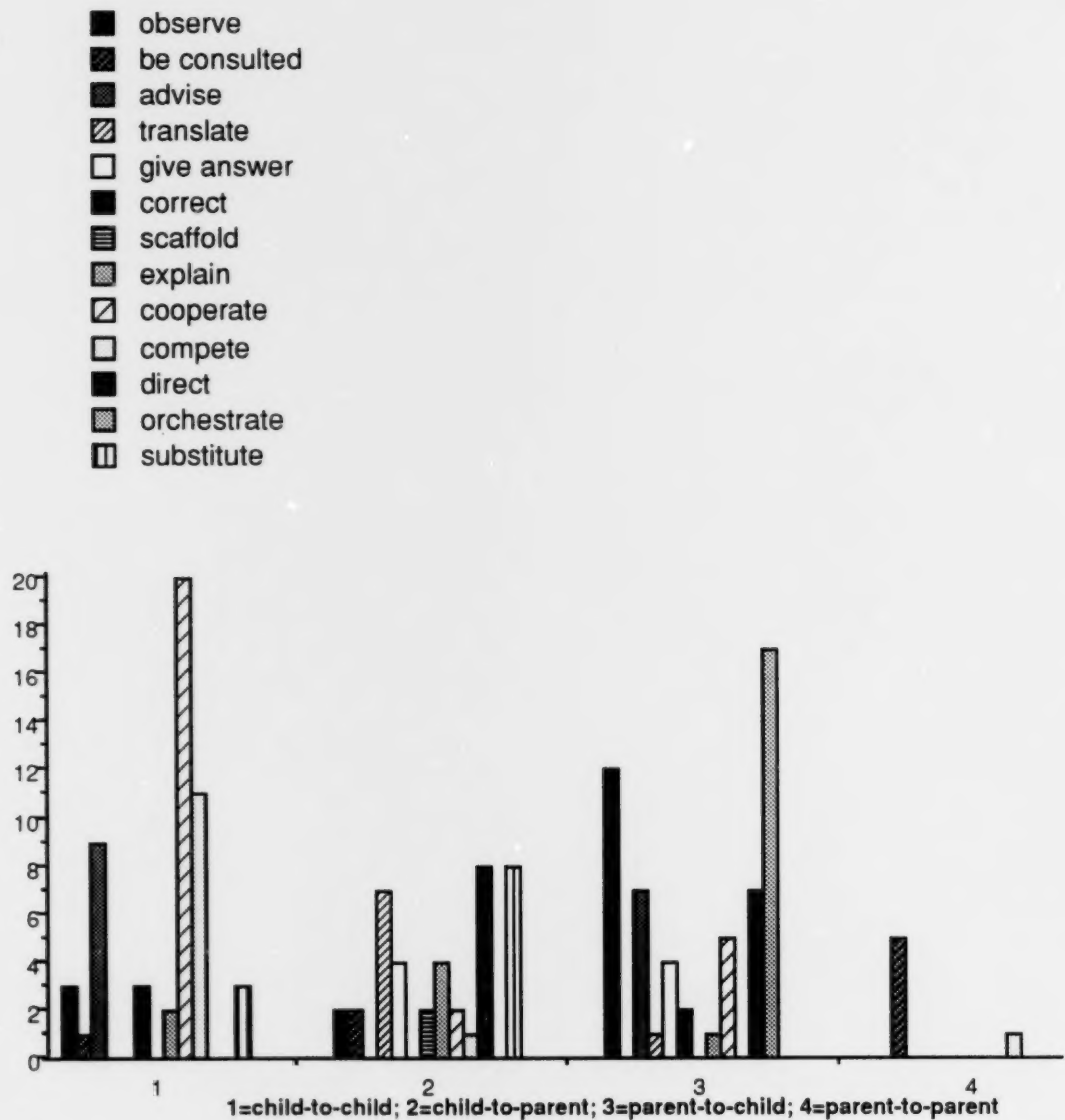


**Figure 6.3:** Histogram of acts performed by parents and children while engaged in each other's literacy tasks.

### Notes on Histogram

Categories two and three, parent-to-child and child-to-parent, are most relevant to understanding the differences in how children and parents participate in each other's language and literacy development.

- Cooperate dominates child-to-child interaction, but none other. This is also true for compete, but not as strongly.
- Orchestrating dominates the parent-to-child interaction, but none other.
- Adults observe children much more than vice-versa.
- Parents do not participate in each others' literacy activities very often (almost never).
- Scaffolding appears only in child-to-parent interaction, a couple times. A more common result of one participant having information not known to an other participant is simply to give it to them.
- The major roles for children engaged in parent-centered literacy events: direct, substitute, translate, give answer, explain (centered around the overt display of knowledge).
- The major roles for parents engaged in child-centered literacy events: observe, orchestrate, advise, and direct (centered around the overt display of power).
- Notably, there is a wide range of difference between the activities in categories two and three. Parents and children behave quite differently when engaged in the other's literacy tasks.

### Description of each type of act

Below, each type of act is exemplified with excerpts from my fieldnotes and described in the order they appear in the histogram above. This order



roughly follows the 'activeness' of engagement in the literacy event, going from the most passive, observation, to the most active, substitution, where the parent or child is actually *doing* the literacy task for the other. The order can also be seen as reflecting increasingly powerful mechanisms for deploying one's fund of knowledge.

### Observe

3/16/93; Lian's; 4:00

Before visiting Lian's I prepared a game on my computer we had played many times before (like 'wheel of fortune'), this time with the answers being places in Lian's immediate neighborhood. I had hoped this would enable her to participate more than usual, drawing on knowledge I thought she had. Lian and her four children huddled around the computer to play it. All the children were really into the game for a while, but eventually complained that it was too easy. Lian hung back and watched her children play, not joining in. Both English and Chinese were spoken a lot while the game went on.

One of the more common ways parents were engaged in their children's literacy activities was simply to observe them. As shown in the example above, even when I tried to structure an activity to allow the active participation of the parent, drawing on their 'fund of knowledge,' they often would not. I do not think this means that the passive act of observation has no effect on the literacy event taking place. The function of the act of observation of homework, games, and other literacy events could be profound. Despite the passivity of this form of participation, some literacy events may not take place at all were it not for a parents' observation. As such it might be a kind of 'invisible' orchestrating move (see description of orchestrating below).

**Be consulted**

2/10/93; Bopha's; 4:00

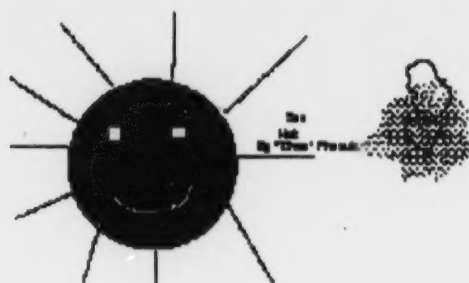
Since my visit last week, Bopha has written what she calls a 'song' in Khmer on a piece of notebook paper. We work together to enter the song onto the computer. Bopha is a little insecure about her Khmer writing skills, and occasionally consults her husband, Ho, on the spelling of words. He sits on the arm of the couch were we are working, looking over Bopha's shoulder. Bopha laughs a lot as we do this.

Parent's consulted each other when working on both English and native-language literacy tasks. Parents also consult their children on English tasks, but I never saw children consult their parents about anything (see Figure 6.2). Being a consultant implies being perceived as a more-capable peer, as in the case above. Bopha perceives her husband to be more proficient at writing Khmer.

**Advise**

4/7/93; Bopha's; 4:00

Two of Bopha's daughters, Leav (7 years old) and Pech (13 years old) are drawing on the computer. Leav is at the computer and draws a black circle for the sun, then carefully draws the rays coming out. Pech watches closely over her shoulder, as they talk in Khmer about the content of the drawing. Pech points at functions of the drawing program and advises Leav to try different things. Leav makes the face on the sun with the eraser, the spray-paint, and the pencil. They laugh at the nose. Next Leav gets the letter-writing tool and writes "Sun/Hot/By Leav P."



Advising is a more active version of 'being consulted,' where the more-capable peer actively and intentionally deploys their knowledge. Both children and parents displayed this type of power when participating in a child's literacy task. Above, the older sister Pech perceives herself as knowing more about how the computer drawing program works, and possibly more about drawing a sun.

### Translate

2/20/93; Saram's; 3:00

Saram's two sons, Nuth and Nuon are working on a spelling activity on the computer. Saram and her husband Chev look on. The boys have set the activity on a very high level, and they don't know some of the words. When they do, they translate it for their parents.

Translation was a common child-to-parent act, where children typically drew on their greater proficiency in English to facilitate their parent's comprehension. Drawing on different language competencies to ensure comprehension of a literacy event was also a prominent feature of the adult ESL classroom (see chapter five).

### Give an answer

4/23/93; Nop's; 4:00

I have started up an activity on the computer which I designed for Nop, which is a spelling activity into which I have loaded some English medical vocabulary Nop has been working on. One of his older daughters is sitting with him at the computer and helping him. When she knows the spelling of a word, she gives it to him, but she often doesn't know the more difficult words (allergies, cough, headache). She sits between Nop and myself, sometimes trying to look at a sheet I have that has all the words written down.

Whenever a child or parent was engaged with the other in a literacy task, they almost always gave any answer they thought they knew. I almost never observed a parent or child withhold an answer they knew, in order to challenge or let the other come up with it. This was rare even during competitive activities (like games). The fact that Nop's daughter gives him all the answers she knows, despite it being 'his' activity, could indicate either a desire to show off her knowledge or perhaps a lack of perceived barriers between different participants' 'funds of knowledge.' Any participant in a literacy event had access to all other participants' language competencies. See 'scaffold' below for one of the rare instances when someone would be denied immediate and full access to another's competencies.

### Correct

1/30/93; Saram's; 3:30

Saram's sons Nuon and Nuth take turns writing their address on the computer. Nuon, the older brother, goes first. We find a couple errors in what he wrote. Nuth seems very happy to write the address over, correcting his brother's mistakes (i.e. no period after 'apt').

I view 'correction' as a slightly more active type of participation than giving an answer. To actually go over another's work and correct it is a more

powerful display of knowledge than giving an answer in the first place, which is probably why Nuth gets so much pleasure out of it. It momentarily puts him, the younger brother, in the classic role of teacher over his older brother. Correction was common in the adult ESL classroom, but I didn't observe many opportunities for it at home.

### **Scaffold**

3/30/93; Lian's; 4:00

Lian and three of her children begin playing a spelling game on the computer. She becomes the center of attention, sitting at the computer with her children around her. They all help her, giving her answers, giving her hints in Chinese, and telling her where the keys are.

Typically in the literature, scaffolding refers to the process by which teachers or parents progressively alter questions till a student or child is able to answer it, finding the learner's 'zone of proximal development.' A standard version would be going from a wh- question to a yes-no question such as, "How do you spell 'phone'? ... Does it begin with an f?" In this typology I use the term to refer to instances where the answer to a literacy task is known to a participant in the task, and instead of giving the answer to the central participant they use alternate channels to get them to come up with the answer, such as giving a translation of the answer, as seen in the example above, or giving spelling hints. Scaffolding is supposed to be the classic form of interaction between parents and children in family literacy activities. However, in the sense that I use it here I only observed it twice, and both times it was children performing the role of the 'knower.'

### **Explain**

5/19/93; Bopha's; 4:00

Bopha's youngest children, Lena and Jimmy are playing a game on the computer. Bopha and Ho watch and wonder what the rules are. Lena explains to them in Khmer how the game works.

I use 'explain' to type a form of participation which as a display of knowledge is more complex than simply giving an answer. It draws on a higher order of understanding. In the example above the daughter is explaining to her parents the meaning of what is happening on the screen, not simply saying 'it's a game.' I saw only one instance where a parent explained something to a child, though a number of times I observed parents *not* explaining something to their children when there seemed to be an opportunity. For example, there were a couple occasions when children were working on questions about the Khmer New Year which they were having trouble with, and the parents had needed information, yet they did not bother to explain it to them.

### Cooperate

1/29/93; Nop's; 4:30

Nop and two of his children, Bun and Sopha, are drawing on the computer. The children lean over the computer, nudging each other out of the way to reach it. The boy wants to draw a house, and I suggest using a certain drawing tool. He and his sister take turns drawing, not too orderly. He draws a window, then she draws a window, then he draws a door, then she draws a chimney. Nop watches on, but doesn't say anything. As with other Khmer children I have observed doing this, they mostly enjoy using the eraser. Most of what they draw they end up erasing.

In cooperative literacy acts none of the participants are 'central,' none perceived as significantly more capable. Cooperative participation in literacy acts (I am including drawing as an 'emergent literacy' act for children) was the



most common type of engagement I observed, by far, for children. While drawing, writing, and even during games, children typically perceived successful completion of a literacy task as a common goal. During games, participants would aid whoever's turn it was, though all would hope to be the one who won in the end.

### **Compete**

2/18/93; Lian's; 4:00

Lian's older sons, Hien and Tran, play a lot of the 'wheel of fortune' computer game. They have become increasingly competitive at this game, for the first time that I've seen holding back answers that they know when it is the other's turn. They even try to sabotage each other's turn by hitting random keys.

Competitive type interaction was not as common as collaborative, even during games. The above instance surprised me at the time. The withholding of known information and absence of answer-giving was rare in my observations, though the desire to win was not. It is possible the two boys had become more competitive as their facility with this particular activity grew, so as to make it more interesting. When the activity was less familiar, and they were learning how to perform it, they had more of an interest in helping each other learn to play it well. Similarly with the drawing activity, as children grew to understand it their turn-taking became more competitive, and they would want to draw different things rather than work together on the same picture. So it is possible the collaborative type of participation in literacy events was more evident as proficiency in a given task was being developed, rather than tested.

### **Direct and substitute**

5.4.93; Lian's; 4:00

I set up a spelling and vocabulary program on the computer for Lian to work on. Though everyone knows this is supposed to be Lian's activity, she will not sit in front of the computer, in front of her children. Tran, Mei, and Chen sit in front of her, at the computer. Lian sits off a little to the side and behind Mei. She can barely reach the keyboard, which I try to move closer to her, but she pushes it back, saying she has long arms. The children know Lian is supposed to be doing this, so they help her type in the answers. Sometimes they physically hold her hand and forefinger and push the keys with it. They read out the letters as they type them. Both Chen and Mei hold her hand, and sometimes all three hands are moving about over the keyboard, simultaneously hitting the same key. Slowly the children take over the activity. They get more bold in typing in the answers for Lian, wait for a shorter time for her to type, till they start taking turns for themselves, fitting Lian into their turn-taking system.

The above example shows participants both directing and substituting while engaged in a literacy task. I use 'directing' to describe a type of engagement which is more sub-skill oriented than giving an answer, less meaning centered. For example, saying 'type C, type A, type T' would be directing, while saying 'cat' might be giving an answer. Directing was one of the most common ways children were engaged in their parents' literacy tasks. 'Substituting' goes one step further - rather than saying 'type C, type A, type T,' participants would go ahead and do it themselves, completing the task which the central participant was supposed to be doing. Above, Lian's children began telling her what keys to hit on the computer to spell the answer, even moving her hand around, and eventually they just started taking turns typing in the answers themselves. The acts are a powerful deployment of knowledge without regard for the educational development of another. The

children enjoy deploying their linguistic knowledge for their mother, but could be seen as doing so at the expense of her own literate development. She seems resigned to this move by her children, going from the center of a literacy event to a passive observer.

### **Orchestrate**

4/21/93 ; Bopha's; 4:00

Bopha's youngest child Jimmy is asleep on the couch. Two of her daughters, Lena and Leav are sitting at the coffee table working on his homework. Bopha tells me Jimmy couldn't remember how to do the rest of his work. It is a story with missing words that are supposed to be filled in. Bopha tries to get me to help, but I cannot because I don't know the story. She pushes her daughters to try and finish it. Jimmy continues to sleep as everyone works on his homework.

This vignette demonstrates how a mother can be involved in the school work of her children and can make use of resources (other children) and networks (like me) to serve the interests of a child's education. This broad engagement in a child's studying I've labeled 'orchestrating,' which includes taking children to the library, setting up a study area, making sure children do their homework, arranging for tutors, etc. These acts are a slightly more 'macro' display of power than directing, and enable the parent to be engaged in their child's learning without necessarily being competent in what the child is studying. It was the most common type of engagement for parents.

### **Micro-analysis of interaction during literacy events at home**

The above typology of participant actions during literacy events is 'language blind' to a certain extent. It does not take into account the language of the interactions or what type of literacy is being developed (first or second

language literacy). Below, 45 minutes of videotape are analyzed according to the typology used above, showing variation in participant acts based on the language/type of literacy being developed.

I had been visiting Lian's family once a week for a few hours after school and through dinner for most of 1993. I usually brought some kind of activity with me to try and engage the family together on literacy tasks, usually on the computer. One afternoon I videotaped Lian and her children working with a couple different computer programs I had found, one introducing the Chinese Pinyin system of writing, and another giving English spelling practice. In analyzing the interaction during these activities I separated those which occurred during the 'Chinese' program and those which occurred during the 'English' one. Figure 6.4 below displays the different types of participant acts performed by Lian and her children during the different programs.

|                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                     |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <u>Child-to-adult (English)</u><br>direct (1)<br>evaluate (5)<br>give answer (6)<br>pose (7)<br>prompt (11)<br>substitute (2)<br>translate (5) | <u>Adult-to-child (Chinese)</u><br>explain (1 - to me)<br>give answer (2)<br>orchestrate (1)<br>read aloud (7 - not responded to)<br>substitute (1) |
| <u>Child-to-adult (Chinese)</u><br>observe (5)<br>repeat (4)<br>translate (3)                                                                  | <u>Adult-to-child (English)</u><br>observe (1)<br>repeat (2)<br>respond (13)                                                                        |
|                                                                                                                                                | <u>Child-to-child</u><br>explain (Chinese)<br>give answer (English)                                                                                 |

**Figure 6.4:** Acts performed by parents and children during videotaped interaction around Chinese and English literacy tasks

Overall, the adult-to-child acts during the English-centered activities and the child-to-adult acts during the Chinese-centered activities are fairly similar, except for the parent's responsiveness to their children during the English activities, which the children do not display during the Chinese activity. However, the adult-to-child acts during the Chinese-centered activities and the child-to-adult acts during the English-centered activities are *very* different. The children made many more engaging moves than the parent, whose few engaging moves during the Chinese activity (reading aloud, explaining) were not even directed at the children, but at me. The children displayed many more teacher-like acts - prompting, evaluating, posing problems and giving answers. The classical initiation-response-evaluation structure (IRE, cf. Mehan 1979) occurred during the English activity, but never during the Chinese activity.

Below is an excerpt of interaction between Lian and her children (Hien and Mei) while working on the Chinese Pinyin program. The character for small, *shiao*, was on the screen, along with its English meaning and pronunciation. Lian begins by reading it aloud, to no one in particular, as Hien and Mei look on:

**Lian:** Small, *shiao*, *Shiao*, little bit.

**Me:** *Shiao*, small? [I am the only one who repeats after her]

**Lian:** *Shiao*. (says something in Chinese while pointing and gesturing to the screen to indicate how this character is different from another similar character) small.

**Hien:** (to me) What's that, p-, piney-in?

**Me:** Pinyin. The standard, simplified form of writing.

**Lian:** *Shiao*, little bit, you say, *shiao*. (to me)

**Hien:** What's third tone? (to me)

**Me:** What's third tone? (to Mei, who read about it earlier)

**Mei:** (says something to Hien in Chinese about the tones)

[Next the character for mountain comes up on the screen. This is a very common character that I thought the children might recognize.]

**Me:** (to Mei and Hien) How do you say this?

**Mei:** I don't know.

**Lian:** *Sua, sua* (different from the Mandarin pronunciation on the screen)

[She asks Hien something in Chinese about what the English word is]

**Hien:** Mountain

**Me:** It says here, *shan*.

**Hien:** [translates to Lian the pronunciation that I use]

**Mei:** *Shan*.

None of the children repeat Lian's frequent readings here. They pay no attention when Lian displays her knowledge. Mei explains to Hien about the tones, not Lian. Lian displays her knowledge to *me*, not to her children. Twice in this excerpt the children ask me about Chinese, not their mother. Mei repeats *shan* after Hien and I have said it, and does not repeat her mother's reading, *sua*. When Lian says '*sua*' it's one of the rare instances I have observed of a mother giving an answer for her children, an unusual situation where a parent has an opportunity to display literate knowledge that a child doesn't have. This is an artificially constructed context, and typically there don't seem to be such opportunities. In this case, Hien doesn't even acknowledge his mother's answer for him.

Next are two excerpts of interaction during the English spelling program. Without direction from me, Lian's 7-year-old daughter Mei takes over the activity, playing the teacher for her mother. Lian sits next to her in front of the computer as it pronounces words to be typed in. In the excerpt below the computer has just said 'bird.'

**Mei:** bird ... *cchio* [she translates for Lian]



**Lian:** *cchio*, B-O... [Lian repeats the Chinese and begins to try to spell 'bird']

**Me:** bird

**Mei:** [prompts for an answer in Chinese, then turns to Lian so her back is to me. Thinking I can't see, she demonstrates the mouth position for saying 'i.' I believe she thinks she is 'cheating' by trying to give Lian the answer.]

**Lian:** I don't know. I forget. But I see, I know.

**Me:** ur

**Lian:** bird

**Mei:** Bir - *urd!* [said with an emphatic rising intonation]

**Me:** I

**Mei:** ra, ra [going on to the next letter]

**Lian:** 'ra'?

**Mei:** ra

**Lian:** 'ra'?

**Mei:** ra

**Lian:** R

**Mei:** Uh huh. Da, da

**Lian:** 'da'? D

**Me:** Bird

Mei is the participant with the 'fund of biliterate knowledge' here for her mother. Mei displays her knowledge by translating, prompting, giving answers. Mei uses a phonics-type approach to the literacy task, turning letters into syllabic sounds (/ra/ for R, /da/ for D). This initially confuses Lian, not understanding what 'ra' means. This is a school-like approach to language, with Mei acting sometimes like a teacher, and sometimes like the more-capable-peer in front of a teacher (sneaking Lian an answer as if I were the disapproving teacher). The classic IRE discourse structure appears:

|                   |              |
|-------------------|--------------|
| <b>Initiation</b> | Mei: Ra      |
| <b>Response</b>   | Lian: R      |
| <b>Evaluation</b> | Mei: Uh huh. |

Soon after, the word 'goat' is said by the computer. Unlike 'bird,' this is an English word Lian doesn't even know. Mei says, "OK, I'll give her the first letter." Chen, Lian's youngest son, is now leaning in between them, watching. He says, "give her 'a,' give her 'a.'" He reaches between them to the keyboard to type it. In this instance knowledge is a commodity to be parceled out, empowering the children over their mother.

### Discussion

What are the differences between how parents are engaged with each other's and their children's literacy development and how children are engaged with each other's and their parent's literacy development? The above descriptions show that parents and children display a wide range of ways of being engaged in each other's literacy development. The types of acts they perform are related to their particular language and literacy competencies, and their position in the family. There is also a strong relationship between the types of acts parents and children perform and their attitudes toward the competencies themselves. For example, most parents have the competency to be fully engaged in their children's native language literacy development; however, because neither parents nor children perceive a great need for this, it happens only occasionally. Competencies, then, are shared and developed in relation to perceived functions in the community.

However, adults and children have trouble with certain literacy tasks. I began this chapter by giving an example of the separate worlds in which Cambodian parents and children live, the "literacy generation gap" which does not allow for fluent literate communication, in English or their L1, between parents and children. As of now, the children see no necessary domain of use for L1 literacy, aside from the rare need to write to a relative in

Cambodia. Because the children are uninterested generally in developing L1 literacy, their parents' desire that they study more of their native language often goes unfulfilled. Parents and children may remain unable to write to each other.

What is the role of the native language in community members' development of English competencies (oral and literate)? As things stand, there is no conscious or consistent integration of their L1 competencies in their L2 development. However, the development of biliteracy in the community could only increase the number and quality of collaborative activities within families, which would aid parents in their pursuit of English literacy and children as they learned to read and write in their native language. Parents' and children's separate worlds need not necessarily remain so, as their complexes of language competencies can continue to be reformulated through communicative collaboration. What is needed is *room* for biliteracy, a place and a purpose for it.

These conclusions raise yet more important questions, to be addressed in the next chapter: How do power imbalances in the family co-exist with other culture-based power-relations which seem contradictory, like children obeying parents' frequent orchestrating moves? Why don't children recognize their parents as knowledge holders, as literate? Where have children gotten the idea that their parents don't know anything? Or that their native language literacy skills are of no value? These are all different tacks at getting at a more complete answer to my final research question, what is the relationship between the patterns of language use and attitudes, the types of acts displayed during literacy events, and the maintenance or change of language, literacy and culture in this community?

## **Chapter Seven**

### **Language and power: A macro-perspective**

I would like to draw some connections between the micro-sociolinguistic data in chapters four through six and some macro-sociolinguistic issues facing this community of learners. There is evidence that drawing on multiple language competencies to accomplish intergenerational learning tasks is possible and productive in the community I have been studying. However, there are also many barriers to the widespread use of this linguistic strategy. This gap between the demonstrable utility of linguistic pluralism and the absence of its development is one of the primary findings of my research thus far, forming a partial answer to my questions about what literacy development in this community looks like, the role of native languages in the development of English language competencies, and the relationship between language use and language maintenance. This chapter will focus on this absence, and these three research questions, from a language policy perspective.

#### **Language policy**

Wiley (1993) argues that language and literacy policy has been used by those with power to "suppress oppositional uses of literacy" (422). Such policies are also used "to promote and to impose the behavioral norms and values of dominant groups" (422). Similarly, Tollefson (1991) claims that:

language policy is one mechanism for locating language within social structure so that language determines who has access to political power and economic resources. Language policy is one mechanism by which dominant groups establish hegemony in language use (16).

Both Tollefson and Wiley warn against viewing literacy, particularly English literacy in the US, as a remedy for social inequities. Tollefson in fact holds the opposite to be true, that "second language learning is not a solution to exclusivity, privilege, and domination, but rather a mechanism for them" (1993: 210). That is, the fact that immigrants in the US find themselves having to learn English is a result of their oppression, not of their efforts at emancipation.<sup>1</sup>

This is a monolithic (hegemonic) view of language policy and planning, seeing most educational providers as arms of the state putting into practice their assimilationist goals. However, this structuralist description of centralized language planning is dependent on a degree of coherence/cohesion both within and between service providers that I do not believe exists in most American contexts. Language use and language learning in this community are circumscribed by a number of macro-policy levels. There are classroom language policies, programmatic policies, local and state educational policies. These policy levels are often in conflict, and there may be little connection between state policy decisions and what goes on in a classroom or home.

For example, is there any relationship between a child's reluctance to ask their parents questions about their native language literacy and the fact that the state in which this study was conducted has an English-only policy in the adult ABE/ESL programs it funds? According to hegemonic descriptions of how dominant ideologies become incorporated into the language attitudes

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<sup>1</sup> Tollefson does not explain why second language learning cannot be both, in the same way that taking aspirin is both a result of a headache *and* an effort at removing it.

of 'the oppressed,' there would be a direct relationship between the two, that the state's lack of interest in native language literacy becomes the child's lack of interest. I do not want to make that case, because I do not think it can be done here based on the research I have conducted. I can merely point out both consistencies and inconsistencies across the various macro-policy levels contextualizing language development in the community I have been studying.

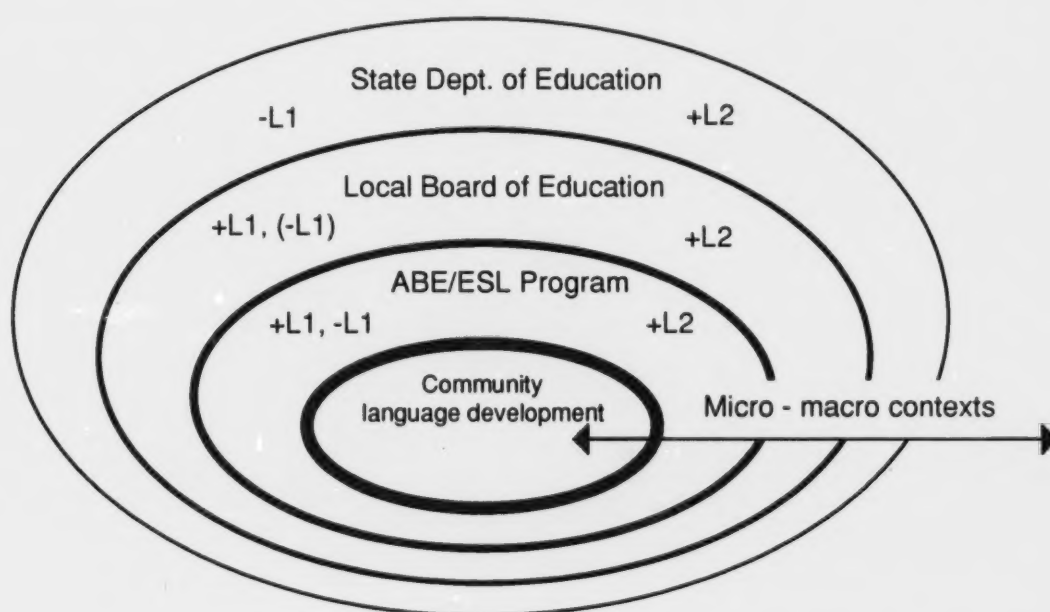


**Figure 7.1:** *Policy levels contextualizing language development in the community*

Figure 7.1 outlines the policy levels circumscribing language and literacy development in the community I have been studying. Within each level I have indicated positive or negative attitudes towards students' native languages (+L1, -L1) and positive or negative attitudes towards English (+L2,



-L2). I describe below attitudes toward language use which I observed at the different levels.

### **The ABE/ESL Program**

The two classrooms at SACA discussed in chapter five had a *de facto* policy of positive incorporation of students' native languages in developing English language skills. However, I found alternative policies expressed by teachers in the SACA ABE/ESL program, and program administrators themselves. An understanding of these policies is integral to answering an aspect of research question 3c - how are participants *allowed* to help each other during literacy activities, with what language competencies? These policies are also relevant to answering question six - at a policy level, what is perceived to be the role of the native language in community members' development of English competencies?

#### **Teachers**

Following the end of the semester at SACA in 1991 I interviewed Hoeun, the Cambodian teacher of the other English class there. I wanted to compare our classes, and ask him about his classroom practices and his attitudes toward language use in the classroom.

When I asked Hoeun if he wrote Khmer translations on the board he said "Yeah, sometimes the student interested in see how is that word written in Cambodian. So they kind of interested in learning both languages." I asked him how useful it was for a teacher like him to know the language of the students. He gave me some advantages and disadvantages. "I think it's more likely for the student who have the background, or the good education, they can pick up real fast and quick, if the teacher bilingual. I can say, OK,

'campaign.' The word 'campaign' means 'ko senan,' thing like that. And the student will understand right away. And then they *refer* to the word and the *meaning*. And then they *know* the grammar, after they know the grammar they will build up the structure and sentence and speak right away."

Despite his description of a bilingual teacher, Hoeun seemed to feel strongly that it is not good to learn from one. "I think it's not a good way to learn, you know. There were some good and bad things about this, OK? ... And also, they don't want to make an effort to speak English with the teacher, because they know that the teacher understand and will, you know, they speak Cambodian to the teacher."

Hoeun said later, "I didn't give you enough information about the disadvantage of the bilingual teacher. The student have the, didn't make much progress in terms of the speaking. ... Because as I said they don't practice as much the speaking. Because they think that the teacher understand Cambodian ... they don't have to speak." Hoeun felt that Khmer was only useful in learning English if the Khmer was good. "If the student who don't have any background in the, their *own* language, it's much more difficult for them to catch up with the bilingual teacher. ... If the student have good mind they can pick up easily and they don't have to go to the dictionary."

I asked Hoeun if he thought it was important for his students to keep up their Khmer. He said, "I think, you know, it's important for them to maintain their language, Khmer, in, not really in class, but they should maintain it outside of the class, because that can be much more easy for them to learn the second language, OK? If they know their language well, they can grow and pick up the second language faster than the people who don't know

any language. That's why I want them to, I think that's no problem for them."

Hoeun expressed what might seem contradictory attitudes toward the use of native languages in the classroom. On the one hand, he talked about students' interest in seeing Khmer translations, and how translation improved students' understanding of English semantics and grammar. In the statement above he noted how learning a second language is easier for students who know their first language well. Yet he strongly believed a teacher's use of students' native languages limited their opportunities to speak English.

At teacher development workshops at SACA I would try to encourage other teachers (from the Vietnamese, Cambodian, and Lao centers) to utilize their students' native languages in the classroom. However, some teachers (who spoke the native languages of their students) were very proud of their insistence that their students only speak English in class. Like Hoeun, they felt that without such a strict rule the students would never use and learn English. They argued that their students spoke and heard their native languages all day, and that English class was the only chance they had to hear and use only English.

I do not know whether these teachers "practiced what they preached," although I know Hoeun did not. The seeming contradiction in Hoeun's statements is probably related to the fact that he did use Khmer in class for various functions (see chapter five). The distinction being made by Hoeun might be between *studying* a language (a meta-linguistic activity for which drawing on native language competencies might be useful), and *learning to speak* a language (which might be slowed down by the use of the native language). Other teachers might follow the same pattern, of using the native

language to talk *about* English, and using only English when trying to get students to *speak* it.

### **A program administrator**

During the year that I taught at SACA with Hoeun, Tann, a Cambodian man, was the administrator there who oversaw the program. He advertised the class, pushed students to attend, and ordered materials. I interviewed him to get an 'administrative' point of view of the English program.

I asked Tann if it's important for the Cambodian community in this country to be bilingual and biliterate. He said, "I believe that, yeah, it is great, you know. For example, you a foreigner, you able to read and write my language. I born in my native land, and I'm able only to speak. But I am unable to read and write, I feel, something wrong with myself there. Even if my parents never sent me to school in Cambodia, I'm going to make an effort myself, say 'hey, look at that. They a foreigner, they able to read and write my language. Why don't I? I have to learn that that's how the people have a mind.' It's more advantage if you know more languages. Bilingual is more able to, very important."

I asked him if he thought it was important to maintain Cambodian culture. He made a link between culture and knowledge of Khmer language and literacy. "It is very important to have the, to preserve their own culture. To know their own heritage, in their own alphabet, their own language." I asked him what the best way to maintain Cambodian language and culture would be. He said, "I believe strongly that in the regular schools they will not teach you that, you know, the Cambodian alphabet or Cambodian culture. So I think up to the parents to, and adults, in the community to educate their children and the youngsters, you know, the leader of a Temple, a monk. Or,

the, we call that the *a-jaa*, you know like the old days in the Temple, who I think they had the big responsibility to educate the youngster. Especially the parents and grandparents. That they do this, that they teach the grandchildren, or the grandson, or their son or their daughter, about the culture and the custom. Not the teacher, *the parents*, well as the teacher. But the parents, yeah..." He was very serious and emphatic about this, as if it was an issue he had had to argue about before.

I suggested to Tann that use of Khmer in my class was helpful. He agreed, "That is a good way. You really developed a good system to let one of your students helping the other by using the dictionary, I think that's a good system, it's a good way. A very, very good way. So at this point the student not going to look at you, 'Ah!' just only learn from you. They learn from the friend also as well as they learn from you. Because you give them a choice, you give them an opportunity to help in their own language, explain to them to give them more courage, you know to talk. It's fine with me, OK? Your friend can help you translate from English to your language, that's fine with me also. You can speak your own language from yourself to your friend. That give you more courage. I think you build a good relationship with the students. That's why they have a chance to learn."

The program administrator was much more receptive to the use of students' native languages than the teachers I have talked with. He might of course have been swayed by his knowledge of my own approach to teaching, but the passion and seriousness with which he expressed his opinion leads me to believe him.



### The Local Board of Education

The director of SACA told me about a meeting to take place between leaders in the Asian community in Philadelphia and the president of the board of education about problems facing Asian children in schools. The director showed me the letter he and other community leaders sent to the president asking for the meeting. He wanted me and the other teacher at SACA to tell our students about the meeting and urge them to go, because they wanted a lot of parents there.

At 8:30 the church was packed with Southeast Asian and Chinese families and community activists and the meeting was just beginning. Signs were placed around the room written in Chinese, English, Vietnamese, and Cambodian describing the meeting agenda. Various petitions were passed around urging the school district to hire more bilingual Asian teachers. The director of SACA welcomed everyone, and the president of the school board said a few words. Then there was a long series of speakers from various sections of the city who talked about what they wanted from the school district.

Some spoke in Vietnamese, Chinese, Cambodian, and Lao, and were followed by translators. A Vietnamese parent complained about the 'English only' environment in schools, where he felt non-English speaking children and parents were not welcome. A student talked about how much he liked the one Asian teacher he had. A Cambodian man from North Philadelphia wanted Khmer-speaking staff to help at schools, at least to help children with homework. At schools, he said, "We are blind and deaf" when they do not know English. Everyone seemed to be pushing ESOL, though they said they wanted it 'improved,' along with more bilingual assistance. The two seemed to go together in many speakers' minds, with the implication that a good



ESOL program would counter the English-only environment of schools. It could be that 'ESOL' to many parents means any specialized language program which is different from mainstream all-English classrooms, any program in which their children's lack of English is taken into account.

All night long, there was only the smallest hint of interest in actually developing children's L1 skills. It was as if everyone assumed children already had these skills and they only wanted the schools to utilize these skills with L1 materials. The school board president was very receptive to all ideas but continually resorted to the 'budget defense,' that the school district had no money for bilingual assistants or new native-language teaching materials. This is why in Figure 7.1 there is a parenthetical negative attitude toward the L1 along with a positive one.

#### **State Department of Education**

In the fall of 1992 I began helping SACA apply for a state grant (353) to develop an experimental family literacy project. Money for these grants comes from the federal government, but is distributed by the states. The specific grant we were applying for funded "Special experimental demonstration projects designed for statewide or regions impact." The proposal I wrote in partnership with SACA's development administrator described a project which would "recognize, draw on, and enrich the mechanisms for the sharing and display of knowledge within immigrant families." We specified that the program would "build on parents' first language competencies." The proposal was not accepted. The primary reason given by the director of the state's Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education, who judged the proposals, was that "the team of readers that rated your proposal noted that the Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education

cannot pay to teach ESL students in their native language" (personal communication).

I wrote a letter back to the director outlining the theoretical arguments and research evidence for using students' native languages in the ESL classroom. He replied that it was against ABE policy for teachers to use students' native languages in the classroom, because "Although there is certainly some merit to your assertions, it has always been, and continues to be, my office's policy to not fund proposals that would involve instructing ESL students who are illiterate in their native language in that language first and then segueing them into instruction in English." He claimed that students in every class come from so many different language backgrounds that no teacher could be fluent in all their languages. "Thus, my office has taken the posture that the instructor of each ESL class that we fund must instruct the class solely in English."

Those were his arguments, despite the fact that in our proposal we never mentioned teaching students in their native language. We merely mentioned *building on* their native languages. His office seems opposed to the simple *recognition* of the non-English literate knowledge that students bring with them into the classroom.

### Discussion

The above stories don't describe a state-sponsored conspiracy, acted out through educational institutions, to oppress minority-language groups. Instead, multiple voices are jostling to define how languages should be learned and used in the classroom. It is true that the voice which might seem to have the greatest authority, the director of the state ABE office, is the most antagonistic toward the use of students' native languages in the classroom.

With his control of funds he has real power to dramatically cause change in language education in the community. However, his views are not imposed on existing programs like the one at SACA. Teachers and administrators can and do disagree with him, and it is their approaches that affect classroom practice.

Yet it remains the case that there is a lack of support, either locally or at the state level, for educational programs in this community which would actively develop biliteracy skills. The state doesn't want to and the local school board says they can't afford it. These groups must bear substantial blame for what might be language and literacy loss in this community. However, there are no laws prohibiting community organizations from promoting native language literacy development. A problem is that in this Cambodian community, such promotion is piecemeal (Hornberger, 1994).

Further qualitative research would be necessary to uncover what kind of relationship exists between 'state' and local attitudes toward language use, whether there is a 'top down' hegemonic transmission of ideology, or a more 'bottom up' transmission. To what extent are community members appropriating literacy for their own purposes (and resisting its use for the purposes of others)? One would need to look at what kind of role local attitudes have in informing language education practices, and how those local attitudes, if strong enough, could affect the ideological positions of state and local agencies.

## Chapter Eight

### Implications for theory and practice

#### Theory

In chapter two I contrasted the sociolinguistic theories of Fishman (1967, 1980), Gal (1978), Street (1993), and Tollefson (1993) regarding the sources of language maintenance and change. The study presented here may shed some light on the differences between these theories. As argued in chapters four and six, Khmer could disappear because children aren't interested in it and parents don't force them to study it. The children see no domain of use for native language literacy (cf. Fishman) and some would prefer to use English to construct an American identity for themselves (cf. Gal). But is this desire the result of a hegemonic transmission of the assimilationist ideology of the 'establishment' (cf. Tollefson), or are children and adults actively fusing a new identity for themselves as bicultural immigrant Americans, accepting of the changes occurring in their lives while appropriating language and literacy for their own purposes in opposition to dominant culture (cf. Street)?

They all can be seen as correct. While Tollefson and Fishman may be correct in pointing out the macro-sociolinguistic structures faced by the immigrant, language change and maintenance, either in the form of resistance or accommodation, occurs at the local level. Educational domains

of use can be constructed at the local level in homes and schools to encourage language maintenance.

One of the seven theoretical arguments made in chapter two (pp. 11-12) was that people should be viewed as agents in their sociolinguistic world, not subjects of it. The parents in my study, in the context of certain economic and social constraints, are prioritizing success in English-only schooling while at the same time (especially Lian, Loun, and Saram) not entirely neglecting the maintenance of their children's native language and literacy competencies. They make use of tutors, local churches, and community centers to reach their goals. Lian has worked to construct clearly defined and separate linguistic/educational domains in her home according to time of the week (weekdays are for English schooling, weekends for Chinese).

In chapters four and six I showed what is *possible*, how parents could appropriate Khmer and English competencies to be used in new domains. In regard to my final research question on the relationship between the patterns of language/literacy use and attitudes and the maintenance or change of language/literacy and culture, it can now be argued that while attitudes are shaped by certain macro-sociolinguistic patterns (e.g., there is no real domain of use for Khmer literacy in this community), micro-analysis of interaction shows that because it is possible to utilize native language competencies as resources, such local 'ad hoc' domains of use can be constructed in homes and schools.

My theoretical assumption that people's native languages play an important role in their development of new language and literacy competencies is held up by my observations that members of this community of learners build bridges from their first language competencies to English by such simple devices as using a dictionary or getting translations from friends

or family, to more complex mechanisms. Such complex mechanisms include the use of the same approaches to English language literacy as they used when they were learning to read and write their first language (copying, recitation). Also included is the use of English literacy in domains which were once domains of first language use, such as religious texts (for Bopha and Bantu), songs and letters (for Lian), news (for Nop) and generally ensuring the life success of children.

There are numerous differences between standard assumptions about mainstream (normative) family literacy practices and the family literacy practices in the community I studied. The "Classical" model of family literacy, which sees the intergenerational transmission of certain literacy skills from parent to child proceeding in certain prescribed ways (e.g. scaffolded interactional discourse), is mostly irrelevant to the language-minority immigrant context. To begin with, this model's reliance on an absolute set of 'literacy skills' is itself in question. Whose literacy skills? For whose purposes? Are the children learning the literacies of their parent's native culture, or the literacies of a culture their parents do not know? There is a little of each. When Lian's children go to a Christian after-school tutoring program to work on the reading of English-language religious texts, it is similar to how children in Cambodia would go to a Buddhist temple to supplement their primary schooling.

The mode of transmission of literacy practices within the family is also more complex than in mainstream families. As shown in chapter six, children are as involved in their parents' language and literacy development as their parents are in the children's. Immigrant parents are emphatically not uninvolved in their children's language and literacy development. In chapter six a typology of acts that parents display during their children's literacy tasks



(orchestrating, observing, directing, advising, cooperating, etc.) was outlined demonstrating what this involvement can look like. It includes, as mentioned above, how parents rely on outside resources to help their children (churches, tutors) in much the same way parents in Cambodia might rely on the monks in temples.

So parents and children in this community bring certain approaches to the development of each other's language competencies which differ from mainstream approaches. But not only does family literacy theory need to move beyond perceiving these differences as deficits, but also beyond reifying descriptions of these differences. By recognizing that a family's fund of knowledge is not static, and does not entirely reside in parents or children, that it is jointly constructed and reconstructed by them, researchers should devote their efforts toward not just description of these funds of knowledge, but how they are created and transmitted between family and community members.

As with family literacy theory, adult literacy theory needs to avoid being an extension of either deficit-modeled 'remedial' learning theory or child reading and writing theory. Adult learners have not failed the system, the system has failed them. Adult literacy students are now beginning to be perceived as having particular strengths and needs as learners which can be recognized in participatory programs. In chapter five I described how in SACA's adult ESL program, the students all had a certain complex of biliteracy competencies and needs which circumscribed their participation in the classroom. The language classroom can be a domain where these multiple literacy competencies, and patterns of sharing them, can be promoted as resources.

The final theoretical argument made in chapter two was that for immigrants the experience of language and cultural change is especially profound, and families are being re-invented with new relations of power and knowledge. The change can be seen in Bopha's, Bantu's, and Loun's adoption of Christianity, and Lian's allowing her children to go to a Christian after-school program and Bible meetings. However, these religious changes fit within a certain strong religious tradition from the native country. Similarly, the language change from Khmer or Chinese to English which is associated with this religious conversion is also tempered by the maintenance of the native language for certain functions, such as Bantu and Bopha's biliterate exposure to the Bible and the Book of Mormon, or Loun's and Saram's children studying Khmer at church on weekends.

The new relations of power and knowledge in the families reflects the children's competencies in the language of wider communication in this society which the parents do not have. However, these new relations do not entirely upset the old ones. Lian displays a powerful authority over her children in certain domains, such as getting them to do their homework and ensuring their development of Chinese language and literacy on weekends. Similarly, Bopha has her children help each other with school work. In the face of the developing bi-culturalism of his children, Nop preserves a Cambodian atmosphere in his home with traditional decor, food, language and music. He and his wife have not surrendered their authority to display their native language and culture throughout their home.

### Practice

My research in ESL classrooms showed me that participants rely on their native language competencies in various ways to help each other with

English language classroom tasks (relevant to research questions 3c and 6).

One of the more simple implications for practice concerns the use of bilingual-biliterate and monolingual-monoliterate teachers in adult ESL classes. The point of the comparative research in the adult ESL classes was not to argue for one or the other, but to describe the possibilities and successes of both, how each was able to be engaged in the bridging of language competencies. Here are some reasons why either type of teacher *can* be effective:

- 1) The biliterate-bilingual teacher, as a member of the community, can fulfill student expectations of teacher behavior and contribute to an atmosphere which the students expect of a traditional classroom setting (Hornberger and Hardman, 1994). The full range of his or her complex of biliteracy competencies can be utilized to bridge students' existing biliteracy competencies, which the teacher shares, with target competencies.

- 2) The monolingual-monoliterate teacher, not usually a full member of the students' community and free of the traditional confines of expectations for teachers and classrooms, can create an educational 'scene' more similar to the students' home environment than what they expect of classrooms. Building around familiar patterns of participation in home literacy activity, monolingual-monoliterate teachers can encourage adult students and their children to utilize their biliteracy competencies to make bridges where the teacher cannot between existing competencies and target ones.

The point of the descriptions in chapter five is not to promote a 'correct' form of teaching. The differences outlined in that chapter are value-free. I intend to complicate the usual cultural continuity/discontinuity framework for examining the relationship between classrooms and

surrounding communities. I would like to argue that neither "classroom culture" was more or less continuous with the surrounding Cambodian community. Acts performed in the researcher's classroom by parents and their children resembled norms for acts performed in Cambodian homes. Acts observed in Hoeun's classroom echoed those typical of traditional Cambodian schooling. The figure below schematizes the way the two classrooms drew on norms of participation around literate activity.

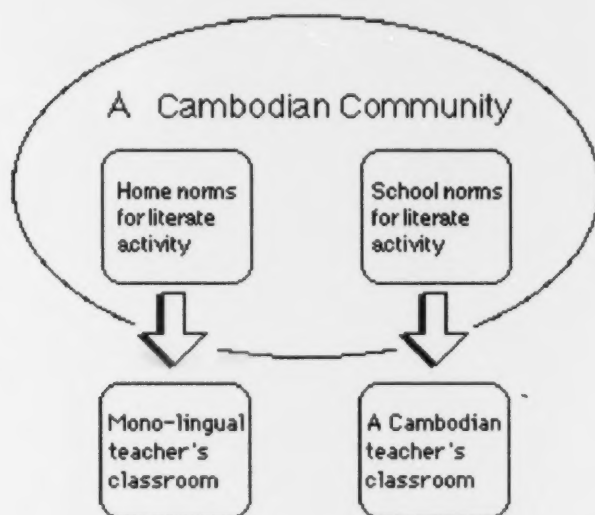


**Figure 8.1:** *Possible relationships between classrooms and the Cambodian community*

Contrary to traditional home/school discontinuity studies, I do not argue that Hoeun, by virtue of his membership in the Cambodian community, created a classroom scene more like learning scenes in that community. As stated at the beginning of this chapter, I do not believe cultures exhibit monolithic norms for participating in learning events. Instead, people have multiple ways for sharing knowledge and creating environments for learning, especially in the case of immigrant communities

who are in the process of cultural change and adaptation. In the case described here, the students and teacher in one classroom drew on norms for traditional Khmer schooling. In another classroom, the students and their children were allowed to create a scene similar to home learning activity, where children and parents drew on each other's changing complexes of biliteracy competencies.

### **The Southeast Asian Family Literacy Lab (SEAFaLL)<sup>1</sup>**

In 1992 SACA solicited my help in writing a proposal for an experimental family literacy program. Integrating what I had learned about effective learning processes in the classroom with my experience visiting student's homes, I developed what I thought would be an effective program for the Southeast Asian community in Philadelphia. Following is a description and justification of that program.

#### **Description**

Most fundamentally, family literacy programs for minority-language, immigrant populations need to take into account different 'knowledge dynamics' compared with programs for more "mainstream" populations:

- Just because a parent cannot read to a child in English does not mean they are 'illiterate.' However, their ability to read to their children in their first language (Khmer, Lao, Hmong, Vietnamese, Chinese, etc.) is not typically respected by the schools, Family Literacy programs, or most sadly, by their children themselves (see chapter six). The knowledge base of

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<sup>1</sup>As discussed in the last chapter, this proposal was not funded because of its supposed reliance on students' native-language skills. However, SACA is continuing to use this project description in applying for funds from other sources.

parents and the elderly in minority language communities goes largely untapped.

- School-aged children in immigrant families are more likely to read English to their parents than the other way around. Pre-school children are more often read to by older siblings than by parents. When parents *do* read to their children, it is more likely to be in their native language (68%) than in English (32%) (Caplan, Whitmore, and Choy, 1989: 103). Most interestingly, those children who are read to in their native language have higher GPAs than those who are read to in English. However, as stated above, parents ability to read to their children in their native language is not usually taken advantage of in family literacy programs.

- Parents' perceived lack of participation in their children's schooling is too often interpreted as a lack of will. Immigrant parents may not practice school-validated norms of supporting their children's education (scaffolded story-book reading activities, attending parent-teacher conferences, helping with homework), but they do demonstrate commitment to their children through other means: taking them to school and back, taking English classes during the day (parents most frequently say they are studying English to help their children with their homework), devoting large amounts of space at home to studying, encouraging siblings to help each other with school-work, and inculcating children to value school achievement.

These differing 'knowledge dynamics' in language minority families are often stigmatized rather than drawn on in many ABE, ESL or Family Literacy programs. There *are* mechanisms for the sharing and display of knowledge within immigrant families, but they are either invisible to outside service-providers or not encouraged.



The priority of SEAFaLL would be to address the above concerns using innovative methods, systems, and materials. Primarily, the project would recognize, draw on, and *enrich* the mechanisms described above for the sharing and display of knowledge using computer-assisted activities involving all family members. A search of the ERIC (Educational Resources Information Center) and NCBE (National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education) databases revealed *no* family literacy projects in language-minority communities which integrated innovative computer-assisted activities with such a view of the strengths of immigrant families.

An innovative family literacy program utilizing computer-assisted activities could build on parents' first language competencies using first language writing systems (fonts in Khmer, Lao, etc.). "There is ...considerable evidence that, even when the language in question uses a different writing system, readers are able to apply the visual linguistic, and cognitive strategies they use in first language reading to reading in the second language" (Wrigley and Guth, 1992: 108). Cummins (1979) best describes the transfer of skills from first to second languages in his interdependence hypothesis, which argues that literacy skills in the first language not only help literacy development in English, but form a basis for acquiring the cognitive skills needed for academic success.

An innovative family literacy program utilizing computer-assisted activities could allow for collaborative/cooperative communication around writing between parents and children which computers have been shown to encourage (Dickinson, 1986; Johnson, Johnson & Stanne, 1986; Sayers, 1989) and which my own research has shown is common in homes in this community (see chapters four and six). Johnson, Johnson & Stanne (1986: 383) provide evidence that "in cooperative situations, communication among

students tends to be frequent, open, accurate, and effective." They hypothesize that in cooperative groups completing some computer-assisted task there would be more talk between students, and more of the talk would be "task-oriented." Such a communicative environment is ideal for written and oral language development.

An innovative family literacy program utilizing computer-assisted activities could allow for interactive reading activities for children and adults, for example using interactive stories on CD-ROM. Social interaction around reading activities is essential for literacy development. Vygotskian theory holds that for children to learn, four interrelated conditions must exist: 1) the presence of an adult or a more capable peer; 2) the occurrence of social interaction between the learner and the adult or more capable peer; 3) that interaction be carried out in a language comprehensible to both learners and adults or more capable peers; and 4) that the adult or more capable peer operate within what Vygotsky called the learner's "zone or proximal development" (ZPD) (DeVillar and Faltis 1991: 10-11). In language minority families, the four above conditions also apply to adults learning in the presence of their children. Children can operate within their parents' ZPD, helping them learn English by providing them input just beyond their current ability yet comprehensible to them. Krashen's input hypothesis about language acquisition builds on Vygotsky: "a necessary...condition [for the language learner] to move from stage  $i$  to stage  $i + 1$  is that the acquirer understand input that contains  $i + 1$ , where 'understand' means that the acquirer is focused on the meaning and not the form of the message" (Krashen 1982: 21). Interaction between parents and children around reading helps both develop language and literacy skills.

An innovative family literacy program utilizing computer-assisted activities could provide *purpose* and *audience* for writing through desk-top publishing of newsletters and books. According to Whole Language approaches to literacy, reading and writing have 'real-world' purposes and audiences which should be incorporated into the classroom (DeGroff 1990: 570). Purpose and audience for writing can also be provided through electronic communications over classroom-based computer networks (Sayers, 1989). Such real-world purposes, for example, could be sharing knowledge about their children's classes and textbooks, or discussing employment issues.

### **Project Objectives**

1) *To develop language teaching techniques using the computer which build on native language and culture.* Meeting this objective would benefit not only a project like SEAFaLL, but through dissemination could benefit other ABE/ESL/Family literacy programs. As outlined in the previous section, current research and theory in language/literacy acquisition point to the importance of building on first language competencies. However, methods have not yet been fully developed in the field of computer-assisted language teaching implementing this strategy.

2) *To use a family literacy approach in effecting a positive change in: types of reading and writing done by parents and children in the project, parents' self-perceptions as writers, and the amount of reading and writing by project participants.* This is a common objective of family literacy programs. The SEAFaLL project would place an unusual emphasis on building on children's active roles in immigrant families. This objective also demonstrates a desire that SEAFaLL have a *qualitative* impact on the lives of

participants, effecting not simply their language and literacy 'skills,' but their real-life *attitudes toward and uses of language and literacy*.

3) *To increase participation and retention of students compared with existing ABE/ESL program at SACA.* Though the number of students served by SACA's existing ABE class is high, attendance is sporadic. Some students come to class everyday, others only once a week or so, and others only drop in for a few days and never come back. It is hoped that a computer-based family literacy program (SEAFaLL) would encourage higher and more stable attendance.

### **Materials and Methods**

- *Hardware: six computers, two printers, a CD-ROM drive, and a modem.* Having what some might see as a small number of computers is *not* a cost-saving step. Rather than have one computer per participant, the goal is to encourage small-group work around each one, allowing six computers to serve up to 20 people at a time. The modem would be used for communication with other ABE/ESL/family literacy programs that are also on-line.

- *Educational courseware* (Spell-It, Reader Rabbit, Broderbund interactive stories on CD-ROM, etc.). This type of instructional software would be a resource for project participants who wish at times to work individually or want to work in an explicit 'language learning' environment. This will not be a central component of the project but is seen as an important adjunct to some students' language development and is also a useful heuristic device at times to encourage participation.

- *Software tools for the production of an 'electronic newsletter'* (word processing, desktop publishing, graphic design, etc.). The use of these tools

would give students training using the computer as it is actually used in the real world (few offices require secretaries or data entry clerks to have facility with "Reader Rabbit"!)). Also, such use of software fits with the role the computer will play in SEAFaLL as a creative and exploratory learning tool, rather than as a simple teacher substitute.

- *Communications software for an electronic 'pen-pal' link-up with other ABE/ESL programs.* SEAFaLL would link-up with the increasing number of classrooms that are going 'on line.' Across the country ESL and ABE programs are communicating and collaborating on joint projects via modems. It would be an ideal medium for the distribution of student writing as it gives them a wide and instant audience.

- *Two strands of authentic reading material for the parents:* 1) the books their children are reading in school (children's literature, young adult fiction), and 2) news items relevant to their lives. Parents' responses to these strands of material will be written and published in the Newsletter.

- *Collaborative/cooperative group work around the production and distribution of the newsletter.* Work surrounding the newsletter (discussion of contents, writing articles, editing, etc.) would be carefully structured so as to involve all students on an equal basis. This could be difficult due to the wide range of cultural, linguistic, and educational backgrounds of the students SEAFaLL would serve. Slavin (1985) offers concrete methods for achieving cooperation in a diverse educational setting. Slavin argues that diverse students *can* work in group learning activities where cooperation, equal-status roles, and knowledge of each other as individuals can develop in a context purposely designed and actively supported by a teacher or monitor.

- *Individualized tutorials as students desire, using educational courseware.* As mentioned above in the description of materials, a

component of SEAFaLL would be individual work on computer-based language activities. This would satisfy many students' perceived needs for explicit language practice. The instructor can help students find and understand the appropriate materials, providing individualized tutorials where they feel necessary.

- *Whole Language approaches to language learning* (integration of reading, writing, and speaking activities; use of authentic reading materials; meaningful and purposeful writing activities; writing as communication to an audience) (DeGroff, 1990). "The whole language approach, based on research in psycho- and socio-linguistics, also supports a natural way of learning language and literacy, but it does not support the idea of a linear sequence from listening to speaking and from reading to writing" (Wrigley and Guth 1992: 29). This approach could work well in the SEAFaLL environment where students would be engaged in activities requiring the integration of speaking, listening, reading and writing.

### **Evaluation/Assessment**

The project objectives would be evaluated in the following ways (these numbers match up with the numbered objectives):

- 1) Teaching techniques would be evaluated as they are developed and implemented on the degree to which they are successful at certain qualitative measures of classroom discourse and interaction. These include: amount of meaningful talk, distribution of turn-taking among parents and children, and spontaneous collaboration.
- 2) We would maintain portfolios for each student containing copies of all of their work. These portfolios would include writing samples upon entrance and exit. We would also collect pre- and post-inventories of reading and



writing behavior of students at home (Lytle and Wolfe, 1989: 54). These measures could tell us if we have effected a positive change in the issues surrounding reading and writing outlined in the 'Objectives' section above.

### Epilogue

A few weeks ago Lian's daughter Mei wrote her little brother Chen's name in Chinese characters on a shoe box in which he kept his toy troll collection. When he saw the writing he didn't know what it said, and his older sister and brother flaunted their knowledge of it and teased him, "Man, you can't even read your name!" They pointed out what each character was. After three years of research in this community, this was the first and only instance where I saw children sharing native-language literacy skills. Chen, now in third grade, can't read his name in Chinese, but is beginning to get exposure to Chinese literacy at home.

Exposure to native language literacy is coming through his siblings, which is perhaps to be expected as most of his participation in home literacy activities is with them, and not his mother. Though she has often expressed a desire for him to learn Chinese, she does not make him. That same evening, Chen was eating a bowl of butter pecan ice cream before dinner. His mother yelled at him and told him not to do it, in both Chinese and English. However, she did not take the bowl away and he continued to eat it. Her responsibility is to tell him that what he is doing wrong, but it is his responsibility to actually change his behavior.

This distribution of responsibility is also relevant to his socialization into the linguistic world of the immigrant. His mother sees it as her responsibility to express her attitudes toward language and literacy development, but it is her children's responsibility to act on them. She blames

them for their lack of native language and literacy competency, just as she blames them for their poor eating habits (eating American food, rather than Chinese). However, the children *do* see it as their responsibility to be involved in each other's language and literacy development.

This may be a great possibility for family biliteracy in this community - that more-capable siblings will follow up on their understandings of their parents' desires for language and literacy maintenance. In either child, adult or family literacy programs, the 'funds of knowledge' that both parents and children are able to pass on to each other should be tapped.

**Appendix A:**  
**Inventory of fieldnotes<sup>1</sup>**  
**ABE/ESL program, 1990-1991**

A = observed attitude toward literacy

B = observed literate behavior

U = literacy use

RU = reported use (self-reported act/event involving written word)

C = community; P = adult literacy program; S = school

|     |                                                      |             |
|-----|------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| A-C | Difference between Cambodian and American teachers   | 3.18.91;330 |
| A-C | Higher education- Hein Son's interest                | 3.28.91;372 |
| A-P | Participant structures - collaboration               | 1.24.91;69  |
| B-C | Children's Khmer ability - students disappointed     | 5.20.91;647 |
| B-C | Children's language ability                          | 5.20.91;649 |
| B-P | Cambodian New Year - Hien Son asks students about it | 4.15.91;470 |
| B-P | Cambodian student learns Chinese word                | 4.18.91;496 |
| B-P | Cambodian students get quiet                         | 2.6.91;108  |
| B-P | Charades go badly                                    | 1.17.91;48  |
| B-P | Child entertained by Chinese women                   | 4.24.91;523 |
| B-P | Chinese students talk more than Cambodian            | 1.30.91;87  |
| B-P | Codeswitching - Vichet and new student               | 2.25.91;180 |
| B-P | Codeswitching                                        | 3.18.91;327 |
| B-P | Codeswitching during debate                          | 5.15.91;608 |
| B-P | Directive to use English                             | 1.7.91;5    |
| B-P | Khmer use - food discussion                          | 2.21.91;167 |
| B-P | Khmer use in Hien Son's class                        | 2.25.91;184 |
| B-P | Khmer use to discuss meaning of word                 | 4.12.91;461 |
| B-P | Khmer use- to researcher                             | 3.1.91;246  |
| B-P | Knowledge of grammar metalanguage                    | 2.12.91;129 |
| B-P | Map interest                                         | 1.18.91;55  |
| B-P | Movies as shared cultural reference point            | 3.19.91;337 |
| B-P | Multilingualism and fish sauce                       | 2.22.91;174 |

<sup>1</sup>This inventory schema was developed by Dr. Nancy Hornberger for her long-term ethnographic project "Literacy in Two Languages."

|        |                                                     |             |
|--------|-----------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| B-P    | Participant Structures - Child does work for parent | 4.29.91;554 |
| B-P    | Participant Structures - Helping                    | 6.3.91;700  |
| B-P    | Participant Structures - helping in L1              | 1.10.91;24  |
| B-P    | Participant Structures - Parent/child               | 3.11.91;275 |
| B-P    | Participant Structures - Parent/child               | 5.17.91;635 |
| B-P    | Participant structures - Parent/child               | 3.5.91;249  |
| B-P    | Participant structures - Parent/child               | 3.5.91;251  |
| B-P    | Participant structures - prompting                  | 1.16.91;42  |
| B-P    | Participant structures - prompting                  | 1.29.91;78  |
| B-P    | Participant structures - translation                | 2.26.91;205 |
| B-P    | Participant structures - translation                | 6.10.91;735 |
| B-P    | Participant structures - translation                | 6.7.91;730  |
| B-P    | Questioning - only Ren answers                      | 3.19.91;333 |
| B-P    | Recipe explained by students                        | 3.29.91;387 |
| B-P    | Replying to Khmer with English                      | 1.24.91;68  |
| B-P    | Replying to Khmer with English                      | 5.17.91;630 |
| B-P    | Request for name of thing - Reth Lor                | 3.28.91;375 |
| B-P    | Son 'volunteers' his mother                         | 4.22.91;515 |
| B-P    | Sophy answers question                              | 1.29.91;77  |
| B-P    | Student can't answer                                | 3.19.91;332 |
| B-P    | Student pays too much for OPD                       | 4.10.91;447 |
| B-P    | Student stereotypes                                 | 5.10.91;590 |
| B-P    | Student uses Biblical-like phrase                   | 4.17.91;485 |
| B-P    | Student's son says good-bye to researcher           | 4.19.91;509 |
| B-P    | Student's son used as translator                    | 4.29.91;550 |
| B-P    | Students chat in Khmer about researcher             | 4.15.91;467 |
| B-P    | Students have studied too much                      | 6.13.91;762 |
| B-P    | Students have trouble generalizing about the past   | 3.18.91;329 |
| B-P    | Students relate one word to another                 | 4.9.91;433  |
| B-P    | Students talk about a final test                    | 6.25.91;802 |
| B-P    | Teacher questioning                                 | 2.25.91;194 |
| B-P    | Translation semantics                               | 4.11.91;455 |
| B-P(I) | Comparison of Chinese and Camb. student behavior    | 4.17.91;482 |
| BC-BP  | Homework can't be done truthfully                   | 6.14.91;768 |
| C      | Blueberry Picking                                   | 6.17.91;773 |
| C      | Blueberry picking                                   | 6.13.91;757 |

|   |                                                     |             |
|---|-----------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| C | Blueberry picking                                   | 6.14.91;770 |
| C | Camb. grocery - Khmer and English use and parenting | 6.12.91;750 |
| C | Cambodian cities                                    | 7.27.90;99  |
| C | Cambodian Grocery T.V.                              | 6.6.91;715  |
| C | Cambodian grocery interaction                       | 2.20.91;150 |
| C | Cambodian grocery interaction                       | 5.22.91;654 |
| C | Cambodian grocery interaction                       | 5.23.91;662 |
| C | Cambodian grocery interaction                       | 6.11.91;742 |
| C | Cambodian grocery interaction                       | 6.20.91;786 |
| C | Cambodian grocery interaction                       | 6.5.91;711  |
| C | Cambodian grocery shop-keeper in 7-11               | 6.20.91;784 |
| C | Cambodian Holidays - Ren forgets them               | 4.12.91;463 |
| C | Cambodian New Year - Ren's opinion                  | 4.11.91;451 |
| C | Cambodian New Year - Reth Lor in D. C.              | 4.15.91;472 |
| C | Cambodian New Year - Student attitude toward        | 4.16.91;479 |
| C | Cambodian New Year - Students don't celebrate       | 4.10.91;446 |
| C | Cambodian New Year different in U.S.                | 4.11.91;452 |
| C | Children missing?                                   | 5.16.91;625 |
| C | Chinatown                                           | 5.20.91;650 |
| C | Christianity 'vs.' Buddhism - Hien Son's opinion    | 4.12.91;458 |
| C | Christianity - Student knowledge of                 | 4.11.91;457 |
| C | Church's importance in student's life               | 5.9.91;573  |
| C | Class for Cambodian children                        | 2.14.91;141 |
| C | Class for children - deficit foundation             | 2.20.91;151 |
| C | Class for children moved - reason                   | 2.19.91;149 |
| C | Class for children moved                            | 2.19.91;143 |
| C | Complaining                                         | 3.28.91;382 |
| C | Cultural Change - Camb. don't eat on floor anymore  | 2.21.91;163 |
| C | Cultural Change - children's names                  | 4.22.91;516 |
| C | Cultural Change - no more fried rice noodle         | 2.26.91;206 |
| C | Cultural Change - Parental control of dating        | 4.17.91;487 |
| C | Educational background of Cambodian Adults          | 7.27.90;93  |
| C | Employment - Job Market                             | 7.27.90;98  |
| C | Employment - working together                       | 7.27.90;100 |
| C | Employment and Welfare                              | 7.27.90;101 |
| C | Employment change                                   | 2.21.91;166 |

|   |                                                   |              |
|---|---------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| C | English more important than Cambodian             | 7.27.90;97   |
| C | English use at home                               | 6.10.91;741  |
| C | Food discussion                                   | 2.27.91;211  |
| C | Food distribution                                 | 2.20.91;156  |
| C | GED wanted                                        | 1.11.91;26   |
| C | Hair cut by other student                         | 6.4.91;706   |
| C | Health                                            | 3.12.91;284  |
| C | Health in the Cambodian community                 | 5.10.91;581  |
| C | Health in the Cambodian community                 | 5.22.91;660  |
| C | Health in the Cambodian community                 | 5.28.91;682  |
| C | Health in the Cambodian community                 | 6.5.91;713   |
| C | Housework                                         | 6.6.91;724   |
| C | Housing and welfare                               | 5.9.91;575   |
| C | Housing condition                                 | 5.13.91;598  |
| C | Housing desire                                    | 1.9.91;14    |
| C | Individual Life History - Reth Lor Lor            | 3.1.91;243   |
| C | Individual life histories - La, Reth Lor, Ren     | 5.23.91;668  |
| C | Individual life histories - Ren and Reth Lor      | 3.18.91;328  |
| C | Individual life history - Educational backgrounds | 2.28.91;231  |
| C | Individual life history - Hien Son                | 3.13.91;293  |
| C | Individual life history - Hien Son                | 3.29.91;384  |
| C | Individual life history - Hien Son                | 6.13.91;756  |
| C | Individual life history - Hien Son                | 6.6.91;717   |
| C | Individual life history - La                      | 3.1.91;242   |
| C | Individual life history - La                      | 6.4.91;710   |
| C | Individual life history - Ren                     | 3.1.91;245   |
| C | Individual life history - Reth Lor                | 2.27.91;214  |
| C | Individual life history - Samien and Vichet       | 7.27.90;96   |
| C | Individual life history - Samien Nol and son      | 12.19.90;191 |
| C | Insurance Discussion                              | 3.28.91;371  |
| C | Insurance in Southeast Asian Community            | 5.17.91;628  |
| C | Khmer language study                              | 7.27.90;105  |
| C | Khmer used to compliment - elicits laughter       | 2.27.91;210  |
| C | Marriage Custom in Cambodia                       | 4.17.91;488  |
| C | Medicine in the Cambodian Community               | 4.24.91;527  |
| C | Mormon visits class                               | 1.10.91;18   |



|   |                                                 |              |
|---|-------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| C | Mormons language ability - Hien Son's opinion   | 3.13.91;295  |
| C | Paper gets distributed at SEAMAAC               | 2.28.91;217  |
| C | Parent Child rift (hypothetical)                | 4.17.91;486  |
| C | Philadelphia vs. Battambang                     | 2.13.91;133  |
| C | Photo album                                     | 2.14.91;137  |
| C | Photo interest                                  | 5.10.91;582  |
| C | Photo's of student's family                     | 5.31.91;695  |
| C | Racism                                          | 5.17.91;632  |
| C | Religion and Nationality                        | 4.11.91;456  |
| C | Return to Cambodia?                             | 7.27.90;103  |
| C | SEAMAAC History, goals                          | 7.27.90;92   |
| C | SEAMAAC's relationship with Chinese Association | 10.17.90;108 |
| C | Shop-keeper gets daughter from school           | 5.9.91;569   |
| C | Shop-keeper watches T.V.                        | 5.15.91;605  |
| C | Sidewalk socializing                            | 3.28.91;369  |
| C | Sidewalk socializing                            | 4.23.91;518  |
| C | Sidewalk socializing                            | 4.24.91;522  |
| C | Sidewalk socializing                            | 5.23.91;663  |
| C | Sidewalk socializing                            | 5.29.91;686  |
| C | Sidewalk socializing                            | 6.11.91;743  |
| C | Smoking                                         | 5.31.91;692  |
| C | Student attitude toward English                 | 5.20.91;643  |
| C | Student attitude toward neighborhood            | 3.14.91;306  |
| C | Student attitude toward neighborhood            | 5.13.91;597  |
| C | Student knowledge of neighbors                  | 6.24.91;799  |
| C | Student must buy shoes for son                  | 5.23.91;670  |
| C | Student visited Buddhist Temple                 | 5.1.91;561   |
| C | Student's favorite holiday                      | 4.11.91;454  |
| C | Student's needs                                 | 5.20.91;641  |
| C | Student's neighbor hangs himself                | 5.17.91;631  |
| C | Student's neighbor hit by car.                  | 5.9.91;572   |
| C | Student's son's name                            | 5.9.91;576   |
| C | Student's Western name                          | 5.15.91;614  |
| C | Student's Western name                          | 5.16.91;620  |
| C | Students around the neighborhood                | 4.9.91;425   |
| C | Students quiet discussing funerals              | 4.16.91;480  |

|      |                                        |              |
|------|----------------------------------------|--------------|
| C    | Students say they eat American food    | 2.19.91;146  |
| C    | Students talk about neighborhood       | 3.12.91;292  |
| C    | Students' attitudes about Philadelphia | 5.20.91;642  |
| C    | Students' knowledge of SEAMAAC         | 1.22.91;59   |
| C    | Students' memories of childhood        | 2.28.91;221  |
| C    | Students' occupation                   | 6.6.91;726   |
| C    | Summer study - discussion in Khmer     | 6.12.91;754  |
| C    | Summer study                           | 6.25.91;810  |
| C    | Summer study                           | 6.4.91;709   |
| C    | Summer study                           | 6.7.91;733   |
| C    | Telephone answering                    | 5.27.91;680  |
| C    | Welfare office                         | 3.7.91;259   |
| C(I) | Cambodian community - tight knit?      | 1.9.91;15    |
| C-P  | Babysitting causes lateness            | 6.24.91;798  |
| C-P  | Child gets key from parent             | 11.15.90;137 |
| C-P  | Children silenced                      | 2.21.91;161  |
| C-P  | Food bought for researcher             | 3.29.91;386  |
| C-P  | Food brought for researcher            | 1.22.91;57   |
| C-P  | Food brought for researcher            | 1.31.91;95   |
| C-P  | Food brought for researcher            | 5.17.91;634  |
| C-P  | Food brought for researcher            | 6.11.91;745  |
| C-P  | Food brought for researcher            | 6.6.91;725   |
| C-P  | Food cooked for researcher             | 3.28.91;374  |
| C-P  | Food given to researcher               | 4.11.91;450  |
| C-P  | Food offered to researcher             | 4.17.91;481  |
| C-P  | Health - La's child                    | 3.1.91;237   |
| C-P  | Interaction before class               | 2.14.91;138  |
| C-P  | Obscene Key ring                       | 6.26.91;812  |
| C-P  | Parenting in Class                     | 6.17.91;775  |
| C-P  | Parenting in Class                     | 6.21.91;794  |
| C-P  | Parenting in class                     | 1.10.91;20   |
| C-P  | Parenting in class                     | 1.17.91;44   |
| C-P  | Parenting in class                     | 2.14.91;140  |
| C-P  | Parenting in class                     | 2.28.91;228  |
| C-P  | Parenting in class                     | 3.22.91;354  |
| C-P  | Parenting in class                     | 4.10.91;438  |

|       |                                                      |              |
|-------|------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| C-P   | Parenting in class                                   | 4.10.91;442  |
| C-P   | Parenting in class                                   | 4.10.91;445  |
| C-P   | Parenting in class                                   | 4.19.91;504  |
| C-P   | Parenting in class                                   | 4.19.91;507  |
| C-P   | Parenting in class                                   | 4.25.91;530  |
| C-P   | Parenting in class                                   | 4.25.91;534  |
| C-P   | Parenting in class                                   | 4.25.91;537  |
| C-P   | Parenting in class                                   | 5.10.91;577  |
| C-P   | Parenting in class                                   | 5.15.91;609  |
| C-P   | Parenting in class                                   | 5.15.91;610  |
| C-P   | Parenting in class                                   | 5.28.91;683  |
| C-P   | Parenting in class                                   | 5.28.91;685  |
| C-P   | Parenting in class                                   | 6.17.91;778  |
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| U-P | Participant Structures - getting help on homework     | 4.8.91;420   |
| U-P | Participant Structures - giving answers               | 5.10.91;588  |
| U-P | Participant Structures - Help refused                 | 5.16.91;621  |
| U-P | Participant Structures - Helping                      | 1.17.91;45   |
| U-P | Participant Structures - Helping                      | 1.31.91;88   |
| U-P | Participant Structures - Helping                      | 1.9.91;11    |
| U-P | Participant Structures - Helping                      | 5.2.91;567   |
| U-P | Participant Structures - Helping                      | 6.5.91;714   |
| U-P | Participant Structures - Helping                      | 11.15.90;135 |
| U-P | Participant Structures - Helping                      | 11.29.90;148 |
| U-P | Participant Structures - Helping                      | 11.9.90;130  |
| U-P | Participant Structures - Helping                      | 12.17.90;182 |
| U-P | Participant Structures - Helping                      | 12.6.90;155  |
| U-P | Participant Structures - Helping, giving answers      | 5.20.91;646  |
| U-P | Participant Structures - Khmer use                    | 3.21.91;350  |



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|-----|----------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| U-P | Participant Structures - Khmer use                       | 5.15.91;611  |
| U-P | Participant Structures - Khmer use                       | 5.24.91;677  |
| U-P | Participant Structures - looking at someone else's paper | 5.24.91;675  |
| U-P | Participant Structures - no helping                      | 5.14.91;603  |
| U-P | Participant Structures - offered help refused            | 2.4.91;103   |
| U-P | Participant Structures - Parent/child                    | 2.28.91;227  |
| U-P | Participant Structures - Parent/child                    | 2.28.91;229  |
| U-P | Participant Structures - Parent/child                    | 2.28.91;232  |
| U-P | Participant Structures - Parent/child                    | 3.1.91;240   |
| U-P | Participant Structures - Parent/child                    | 3.25.91;361  |
| U-P | Participant Structures - Parent/child                    | 3.25.91;362  |
| U-P | Participant Structures - Parent/child                    | 3.5.91;248   |
| U-P | Participant Structures - Parent/child                    | 4.19.91;508  |
| U-P | Participant Structures - Parent/child                    | 4.22.91;511  |
| U-P | Participant Structures - Parent/child                    | 4.22.91;514  |
| U-P | Participant Structures - Parent/child                    | 4.26.91;542  |
| U-P | Participant Structures - Parent/child                    | 4.26.91;544  |
| U-P | Participant Structures - Parent/child                    | 4.29.91;551  |
| U-P | Participant Structures - Parent/child                    | 4.29.91;553  |
| U-P | Participant Structures - Parent/child                    | 4.29.91;558  |
| U-P | Participant Structures - Parent/child                    | 5.10.91;583  |
| U-P | Participant Structures - Parent/child                    | 5.17.91;633  |
| U-P | Participant Structures - Parent/child                    | 5.17.91;636  |
| U-P | Participant Structures - Parent/child                    | 5.17.91;637  |
| U-P | Participant Structures - Parent/child                    | 5.24.91;673  |
| U-P | Participant Structures - Parent/child                    | 5.24.91;674  |
| U-P | Participant Structures - Parent/child                    | 5.24.91;676  |
| U-P | Participant Structures - Parent/child                    | 12.6.90;157  |
| U-P | Participant Structures - Parent/child                    | 12.7.90;165  |
| U-P | Participant Structures - Prompting                       | 2.22.91;177  |
| U-P | Participant Structures - Prompting                       | 2.7.91;116   |
| U-P | Participant Structures - Prompting                       | 5.16.91;626  |
| U-P | Participant Structures - Prompting                       | 12.17.90;181 |
| U-P | Participant Structures - Prompting                       | 12.6.90;160  |
| U-P | Participant Structures - Reading along                   | 1.15.91;39   |
| U-P | Participant Structures - Seth can't work alone           | 1.15.91;38   |

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| U-P | Participant Structures - sharing work                      | 4.24.91;526 |
| U-P | Participant Structures - Student doesn't participate       | 4.26.91;543 |
| U-P | Participant Structures                                     | 4.18.91;498 |
| U-P | Participant Structures - student answers for teacher       | 1.14.91;32  |
| U-P | Participant Structures - student answers for teacher       | 1.24.91;71  |
| U-P | Participant Structures - too much help                     | 4.4.91;415  |
| U-P | Participant Structures - working alone                     | 2.28.91;224 |
| U-P | Participant Structures - working alone                     | 2.7.91;114  |
| U-P | Participant Structures - writing                           | 2.13.91;134 |
| U-P | Participant structures - Adult/child                       | 6.25.91;806 |
| U-  | Participant structures - Adult/child                       | 6.25.91;808 |
| U-P | Participant structures - concern for another's problems    | 6.14.91;769 |
| U-P | Participant structures - helping                           | 6.17.91;780 |
| U-P | Participant structures - helping                           | 6.20.91;788 |
| U-P | Participant structures - helping with spelling             | 6.13.91;759 |
| U-P | Participant structures - looking at someone else's paper   | 6.11.91;747 |
| U-P | Participant structures - Parent/child                      | 6.14.91;765 |
| U-P | Participant structures - Parent/child                      | 6.17.91;779 |
| U-P | Participant structures - Parent/child                      | 6.26.91;816 |
| U-P | Participant structures - Parent/child                      | 6.26.91;818 |
| U-P | Participant structures - Parent/child                      | 6.26.91;819 |
| U-P | Participant structures - prompting                         | 6.26.91;815 |
| U-P | Participation structures - looking at someone else's paper | 6.10.91;736 |
| U-P | Participation structures - volunteering                    | 6.10.91;737 |
| U-P | Pronunciation as decoding                                  | 12.6.90;161 |
| U-P | Pronunciation discussion                                   | 3.14.91;312 |
| U-P | Question Marks Khmer-like                                  | 5.20.91;645 |
| U-P | Read-repeat routine in Vichet's class                      | 2.25.91;188 |
| U-P | Reading Aloud - Prompting and Errors                       | 3.11.91;276 |
| U-P | Reading Aloud                                              | 2.25.91;203 |
| U-P | Reading aloud - reading along                              | 1.29.91;79  |
| U-P | Reading aloud                                              | 3.8.91;265  |
| U-P | Reading aloud                                              | 6.11.91;749 |
| U-P | Reading aloud                                              | 6.6.91;721  |
| U-P | Reading aloud from text in Hien Son's class                | 4.15.91;474 |
| U-P | Reading aloud syllables                                    | 3.20.91;344 |

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| U-P | Reading maps                                         | 1.17.91;47   |
| U-P | Ren asks about necklace wearing                      | 11.16.90;144 |
| U-P | Ren thanks researcher for corrections                | 11.16.90;140 |
| U-P | Ren's materials - lost handout                       | 1.22.91;60   |
| U-P | Request for check - Ren                              | 3.7.91;261   |
| U-P | Request for check                                    | 3.12.91;289  |
| U-P | Request for check                                    | 2.14.91;310  |
| U-P | Request for check                                    | 3.25.91;363  |
| U-P | Request for check                                    | 3.8.91;267   |
| U-P | Request for definition - 'graduate' - Ren            | 2.28.91;234  |
| U-P | Request for definition - 'lawn' - Trouble with Kathy | 4.8.91;424   |
| U-P | Request for definition - 'Mexican' - Ren             | 1.14.91;34   |
| U-P | Request for definition - 'this weekend' - Khanh      | 12.17.90;180 |
| U-P | Request for definition - 'uncomfortable' - Ren       | 3.12.91;283  |
| U-P | Request for definition - 'vacation'                  | 12.18.90;188 |
| U-P | Request for definition - 'younger' - Ren             | 2.28.91;225  |
| U-P | Request for grammar explanation - past tense - Ren   | 3.20.91;341  |
| U-P | Request for meaning of Jell-O - Hien Son             | 4.8.91;418   |
| U-P | Request for spelling - 'Angkor' - Ren                | 3.14.91;311  |
| U-P | Request for spelling - 'bdrm' - Ren                  | 3.18.91;325  |
| U-P | Request for spelling - 'bookstore' - Ren             | 1.14.91;31   |
| U-P | Request for spelling - 'chewing' - La                | 3.28.91;377  |
| U-P | Request for spelling - 'eight' - Ren                 | 12.7.90;166  |
| U-P | Request for spelling - 'electric' - Ky               | 11.16.90;142 |
| U-P | Request for spelling - 'everying' - Ren              | 12.13.90;171 |
| U-P | Request for spelling - 'glasses' - Ren               | 5.15.91;613  |
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| U-P | Request for spelling - 'letter' - Ren                | 4.3.91;408   |
| U-P | Request for spelling - 'listening' - Ren             | 3.29.91;392  |
| U-P | Request for spelling - 'loud' - Ren                  | 3.12.91;287  |
| U-P | Request for spelling - 'month' - La                  | 4.18.91;497  |
| U-P | Request for spelling - 'rope' - Sophy                | 2.28.91;223  |
| U-P | Request for spelling - 'self' - Sophy                | 2.27.91;213  |
| U-P | Request for spelling - 'Walnut' - Ren                | 3.19.91;334  |
| U-P | Request for spelling - La, 'about'                   | 6.13.91;761  |
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| U-P | Requests for definitions - 'cruise,' 'novel' - Ren, La | 3.22.91;357 |
| U-P | Requests for spelling - Sophy, Seth                    | 1.24.91;70  |
| U-P | Researcher's handout                                   | 11.1.90;112 |
| U-P | Script - Cursive                                       | 3.14.91;314 |
| U-P | Seth doesn't do anything                               | 1.18.91;51  |
| U-P | Son answers question                                   | 6.27.91;826 |
| U-P | Sophy's notebook                                       | 1.29.91;80  |
| U-P | Sophy's notes                                          | 1.10.91;17  |
| U-P | Spelling to indicate a word                            | 2.25.91;191 |
| U-P | Student asks about bulletin board                      | 5.16.91;615 |
| U-P | Student asks about names                               | 2.27.91;215 |
| U-P | Student checks 'swimming' on the board                 | 2.25.91;201 |
| U-P | Student checks out new text                            | 4.19.91;500 |
| U-P | Student checks out new text with son                   | 4.19.91;506 |
| U-P | Student doesn't work today                             | 4.17.91;484 |
| U-P | Student doodles, erases                                | 3.18.91;326 |
| U-P | Student helps researcher with Khmer                    | 4.15.91;471 |
| U-P | Student helps researcher with Khmer                    | 4.19.91;505 |
| U-P | Student helps researcher with Khmer                    | 4.29.91;548 |
| U-P | Student improvises when reading dialogue               | 6.4.91;707  |
| U-P | Student Interaction - Trouble ?                        | 4.9.91;431  |
| U-P | Student interaction before class                       | 1.22.91;58  |
| U-P | Student likes fast food                                | 6.20.91;790 |
| U-P | Student looks through magazine                         | 6.7.91;728  |
| U-P | Student reactions to their own mistake                 | 3.13.91;302 |
| U-P | Student role-plays creatively                          | 6.11.91;746 |
| U-P | Student skips lines in dialogue                        | 6.6.91;723  |
| U-P | Student wants newspaper                                | 6.19.91;783 |
| U-P | Student Working - use model                            | 4.15.91;473 |
| U-P | Student working - can't work alone                     | 4.25.91;532 |
| U-P | Student working - reading aloud                        | 4.25.91;531 |
| U-P | Student's boy reads magazine                           | 5.10.91;579 |
| U-P | Student's children get magazines                       | 6.25.91;805 |
| U-P | Student's children work in workbook                    | 6.25.91;807 |
| U-P | Student's daughter reads Pinocchio                     | 6.25.91;804 |
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| U-P | Student's materials                         | 3.18.91;324  |
| U-P | Student's son draws pictures                | 2.28.91;233  |
| U-P | Student's son looks through textbook        | 6.26.91;817  |
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| U-P | Students find humor in '-un'                | 3.12.91;286  |
| U-P | Students interested in diacritical marks    | 5.22.91;658  |
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| U-P | Students request reading                    | 2.25.91;199  |
| U-P | Students take notes                         | 4.3.91;404   |
| U-P | Students try to learn thought               | 2.25.91;202  |
| U-P | Students working - almost no interaction    | 4.25.91;538  |
| U-P | Students working - confusion                | 5.13.91;599  |
| U-P | Students working - copying                  | 3.12.91;291  |
| U-P | Students working - creative, then use model | 6.11.91;748  |
| U-P | Students working - Khmer use                | 3.19.91;336  |
| U-P | Students working - Khmer use                | 3.20.91;340  |
| U-P | Students working - Looking on papers        | 3.28.91;380  |
| U-P | Students working - Speed and Style          | 3.6.91;256   |
| U-P | Students working - speed                    | 4.25.91;536  |
| U-P | Students working - speed                    | 11.15.90;136 |
| U-P | Students working - speed and style          | 1.10.91;21   |
| U-P | Students working - speed and style          | 12.14.90;177 |
| U-P | Students working - speed and style          | 12.18.90;187 |
| U-P | Students working - Style                    | 2.27.91;212  |
| U-P | Students working - Style                    | 3.12.91;288  |
| U-P | Students working - Style                    | 3.12.91;290  |
| U-P | Students working - Style                    | 3.14.91;313  |
| U-P | Students working - Style                    | 3.14.91;321  |
| U-P | Students working - Style                    | 3.20.91;342  |
| U-P | Students working - Style                    | 4.3.91;406   |
| U-P | Students working - Style                    | 4.4.91;414   |
| U-P | Students working - Style                    | 12.19.90;193 |
| U-P | Students working - Style                    | 12.19.90;194 |
| U-P | Students working - Style and Khmer use      | 4.2.91;401   |
| U-P | Students working - Styles and results       | 3.27.91;368  |
| U-P | Students working - test taking strategies   | 6.26.91;822  |



|       |                                                   |              |
|-------|---------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| U-P   | Students working - Use model                      | 4.9.91;430   |
| U-P   | Students working on crossword puzzle              | 1.25.91;74   |
| U-P   | Students write about childhood                    | 2.28.91;230  |
| U-P   | Students write invitations                        | 5.24.91;678  |
| U-P   | Students write sentences                          | 6.10.91;740  |
| U-P   | Students' answers to test question                | 6.26.91;823  |
| U-P   | Students' Notebooks                               | 11.5.90;118  |
| U-P   | Students' reactions to new handout                | 1.18.91;53   |
| U-P   | Students' children during 20 questions            | 12.6.90;158  |
| U-P   | Teacher approach to text                          | 1.7.91;6     |
| U-P   | Teacher asks student to read aloud                | 2.25.91;197  |
| U-P   | Teacher correction of student copying             | 2.25.91;190  |
| U-P   | Teacher corrects copying                          | 2.25.91;200  |
| U-P   | Teacher praises student                           | 4.19.91;502  |
| U-P   | Teacher questioning                               | 2.25.91;192  |
| U-P   | Teacher teaches 'swimming'                        | 2.25.91;193  |
| U-P   | Teacher teaches seasons                           | 2.25.91;198  |
| U-P   | Text written on board                             | 2.25.91;185  |
| U-P   | Textbook demand                                   | 4.22.91;512  |
| U-P   | Textbook kept                                     | 6.3.91;701   |
| U-P   | Translation problems                              | 5.23.91;669  |
| U-P   | Vietnamese man reads materials around class       | 1.18.91;50   |
| U-P   | Want-ads interest                                 | 6.20.91;789  |
| U-P   | Writing about most interesting person             | 12.13.90;169 |
| U-P   | Writing preference                                | 2.4.91;105   |
| U-P   | Writing process                                   | 2.4.91;104   |
| U-P   | Writing Recipes                                   | 3.1.91;238   |
| U-P   | Writing short stories                             | 1.24.91;67   |
| U-P   | Writing stories - emphasis on neatness            | 1.24.91;73   |
| U-P   | Writing strip stories                             | 1.23.91;64   |
| U-P   | Writing styles                                    | 2.13.91;132  |
| UP(I) | Participation structures - parent/child           | 4.22.91;517  |
| UC-UP | Bible Club membership card                        | 5.9.91;574   |
| UC-UP | Cambodian dish actually Chinese                   | 2.27.91;207  |
| UC-UP | Children interfere with students' studies at home | 2.22.91;178  |
| UC-UP | Copying sentences over                            | 1.29.91;82   |



|                                                |             |
|------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| UC-UP Homework - Child helps parent            | 1.29.91;81  |
| UC-UP Homework - Child helps parent            | 1.9.91;13   |
| UC-UP Homework - Child helps parent            | 3.7.91;262  |
| UC-UP Homework - Child helps parent            | 4.10.91;440 |
| UC-UP Homework - Child helps parent            | 4.11.91;453 |
| UC-UP Homework - Child helps parent            | 4.16.91;477 |
| UC-UP Homework - Child helps parent            | 4.16.91;478 |
| UC-UP Homework - Child helps parent            | 4.24.91;525 |
| UC-UP Homework - Child helps parent            | 4.9.91;427  |
| UC-UP Homework - Child helps parent            | 6.26.91;814 |
| UC-UP Homework - Children help parents         | 3.28.91;376 |
| UC-UP Homework - Comparison of students' work  | 3.12.91;281 |
| UC-UP Homework - Complaining                   | 3.29.91;388 |
| UC-UP Homework - La afraid of lying            | 6.17.91;774 |
| UC-UP Homework - La works ahead                | 3.13.91;298 |
| UC-UP Homework - La works ahead                | 6.4.91;705  |
| UC-UP Homework - La works ahead                | 6.7.91;731  |
| UC-UP Homework - None done                     | 4.2.91;399  |
| UC-UP Homework - Ren complains about landlord  | 4.3.91;403  |
| UC-UP Homework - student works ahead           | 5.22.91;657 |
| UC-UP Homework - Who did it                    | 4.4.91;413  |
| UC-UP Homework                                 | 1.22.91;61  |
| UC-UP Homework                                 | 2.4.91;100  |
| UC-UP Homework                                 | 3.8.91;264  |
| UC-UP Homework done by daughter                | 5.14.91;602 |
| UC-UP Homework done by daughter                | 5.16.91;622 |
| UC-UP Homework done by daughter                | 6.14.91;766 |
| UC-UP Homework done well                       | 3.21.91;346 |
| UC-UP Homework done with son                   | 1.23.91;65  |
| UC-UP Homework not done over the weekend       | 4.29.91;547 |
| UC-UP Khmer-English Dictionary use at home     | 4.12.91;460 |
| UC-UP Khmer-English Picture Dictionary stained | 4.22.91;513 |
| UC-UP Name written in book                     | 4.29.91;557 |
| UC-UP Newsletter wanted by student             | 6.6.91;727  |
| UC-UP Notes from "Family Feud"                 | 4.9.91;428  |
| UC-UP Sophy works with son's school book       | 1.22.91;62  |

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| UC-UP Student asks for help with form        | 2.25.91;181 |
| UC-UP Teacher asks about Khmer literacy      | 2.25.91;196 |
| UC-UP Written Recipe                         | 3.1.91;244  |
| UC-UP-US (I)Student's son's school materials | 4.29.91;552 |
| UC-UP-U Children have awards from school     | 6.14.91;764 |
| UC-UP-US Letter from school                  | 2.21.91;160 |

## Appendix B: Inventory of interview notes

OE=oral English  
WE=written English

OL1=oral first language  
WL1=written first language

| <u>Success</u> | <u>Instrument/Channel</u> | <u>Participants</u>        |
|----------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| Successful     | OE                        | Adult - Loun               |
| Successful     | OE                        | Boy - Tran                 |
| Successful     | OE                        | Boy - Tran                 |
| Successful     | OE                        | Boy - Tran                 |
| Successful     | OE                        | Children - Loun's          |
| Successful     | OE                        | Each Boy                   |
| Successful     | OE                        | Each Boy                   |
| Successful     | OE                        | Each Boy                   |
| Successful     | OE                        | Each Boy                   |
| Successful     | OE                        | Family - Saram's           |
| Successful     | OE                        | Father - Nop               |
| Successful     | OE                        | Mother                     |
| Successful     | OE                        | Mother - Chanta            |
| Successful     | OE                        | Son and friend- R.         |
| Successful     | OE, OL1                   | Adult and friends          |
| Successful     | OE, OL1                   | Boy and family             |
| Successful     | OE, OL1                   | Child - Chanta's son David |
| Successful     | OE, OL1                   | Each Boy                   |
| Successful     | OE, OL1                   | Each Boy                   |
| Successful     | OE, OL1                   | Family - Loun's            |
| Successful     | OE, OL1                   | Family - Saram's           |
| Successful     | OE, OL1                   | Family - Bantu's           |
| Successful     | OE, OL1                   | Mother - Lian              |
| Successful     | OE, OL1                   | Mother and baby            |
| Successful     | OE, OL1                   | Mother and children        |
| Successful     | OE, OL1                   | Mother and daughter        |
| Successful     | OE, OL1                   | Mother and son             |
| Successful     | OE, OL1                   | Mother and son             |



Successful OL1  
 Successful OL1  
 Successful OL1  
 Successful OL1  
 Successful OL1  
 Successful OL1  
 Successful OL1  
 Successful OL1  
 Successful OL1  
 Successful OL1, WL1  
 Successful OL1, WL1  
 Successful OL1, WL1  
 Successful OL1, WL1  
 Successful OL1, WL1  
 Successful OL1, WL1  
 Successful OL1, WL1  
 Successful WE  
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 Successful WE  
 Successful WE  
 Successful WE  
 Successful WE  
 Successful WE, OL1  
 Successful WE, OL1  
 Successful WE, OL1  
 Successful WE, OL1  
 Successful WE, WL1  
 Successful WE, WL1  
 Successful WE, WL1  
 Successful WE, WL1  
 Successful WE, WL1

Father - Nop  
 Mother - Lian  
 Mother and child  
 Mother and children  
 Parents and Boys  
 Woman - Saram  
 Woman - Bantu  
 Woman and friend  
 Woman and friends  
 Boys  
 Children - Loun's  
 Children - Loun's  
 Children - Loun's  
 Mother and children  
 Parent and children  
 Woman and family  
 Adult-Researcher  
 Boy - V.  
 Children  
 Children - Loun's  
 Daughter - Pech  
 Father - Nop  
 Mother - Bopha  
 Mother - Bopha  
 Mother and child  
 Sons - Nuon and Nuth  
 Woman and researcher  
 Father and son  
 Mother and child  
 Mother and children  
 Mother and children  
 Adult - Loun  
 Adult - Loun  
 Father - Nop  
 Father - Nop  
 Father - Nop

|              |             |                                |
|--------------|-------------|--------------------------------|
| Successful   | WE, WL1     | Mother - Bopha                 |
| Successful   | WE, WL1     | Woman                          |
| Successful   | WL1         | Adult and family               |
| Successful   | WL1         | Boy - Nuon                     |
| Successful   | WL1         | Daughters                      |
| Successful   | WL1         | Father - Nop                   |
| Successful   | WL1         | Woman and friends              |
| Unsuccessful | OE          | Adult - Loun                   |
| Unsuccessful | OE          | Boy - V.                       |
| Unsuccessful | OE          | Boy - V.                       |
| Unsuccessful | OE          | Father - Nop                   |
| Unsuccessful | OE          | Mother - Bopha                 |
| Unsuccessful | OE          | Mother and son                 |
| Unsuccessful | OE          | Mother-teacher, Father-teacher |
| Unsuccessful | OE          | Teachers and Boys              |
| Unsuccessful | OE          | Woman - Bopha                  |
| Unsuccessful | OE          | Woman and researcher           |
| Unsuccessful | OE, OL1     | Mother and children            |
| Unsuccessful | OE, OL1     | Mother and children            |
| Unsuccessful | OE, WE      | Adult                          |
| Unsuccessful | OE, WE      | Adult - husband                |
| Unsuccessful | OE, WE      | Boy - Tran                     |
| Unsuccessful | OE, WE      | Each Boy                       |
| Unsuccessful | OE, WE      | Each Boy                       |
| Unsuccessful | OE, WE      | Father - Nop                   |
| Unsuccessful | OE, WE      | Man                            |
| Unsuccessful | OE, WE      | Woman                          |
| Unsuccessful | OE, WE, OL1 | Boy and mother                 |
| Unsuccessful | OE, WE, OL1 | Mother - Lian                  |
| Unsuccessful | OE, WE, WL1 | Father - Nop                   |
| Unsuccessful | OL1         | Boy - Tran                     |
| Unsuccessful | OL1         | Boys                           |
| Unsuccessful | OL1         | Children - Loun's              |
| Unsuccessful | OL1         | Mother and children            |
| Unsuccessful | OL1         | Mother and children            |
| Unsuccessful | OL1         | Woman - Bopha                  |



|              |          |                     |
|--------------|----------|---------------------|
| Unsuccessful | OL1, WL1 | Boy - Tran          |
| Unsuccessful | OL1, WL1 | Boy and mother      |
| Unsuccessful | OL1, WL1 | Each Boy            |
| Unsuccessful | OL1, WL1 | Mother and children |
| Unsuccessful | OL1, WL1 | Mother and children |
| Unsuccessful | OL1, WL1 | Woman and family    |
| Unsuccessful | WE       | Adult - Chanta      |
| Unsuccessful | WE       | Boy - Tran          |
| Unsuccessful | WE       | Each Boy            |
| Unsuccessful | WE       | Father - Nop        |
| Unsuccessful | WE       | Mother and Children |
| Unsuccessful | WE       | Mother and children |
| Unsuccessful | WE, WL1  | Adult - Saram       |
| Unsuccessful | WL1      | Adult - Loun        |
| Unsuccessful | WL1      | Adults              |
| Unsuccessful | WL1      | Boy - Nuon          |
| Unsuccessful | WL1      | Boy - Nuon          |
| Unsuccessful | WL1      | Boy - Tran          |
| Unsuccessful | WL1      | Children            |
| Unsuccessful | WL1      | Children - Loun's   |
| Unsuccessful | WL1      | Father - Nop        |
| Unsuccessful | WL1      | Father - Nop        |
| Unsuccessful | WL1      | Parents and Boys    |

# Appendix C: 1993 Inventory of fieldnotes

OE=oral English  
WE=written English

OL1=oral first language  
WL1=written first language

|                                        |                  |             |
|----------------------------------------|------------------|-------------|
| Adult gets work to do                  | OE, WE           | 1.26.93;14  |
| Apartment Description                  | OE               | 1.27.93.;18 |
| Apartment description                  | OE               | 1.29.93.;34 |
| Approach to L1 description             | OE, OL1, WL1     | 3.16.93;217 |
| Approach to L1 description             | OE, WE, OL1, WL2 | 3.30.93;238 |
| Article collection - description       | WE, WL1          | 5.9.93;380  |
| Article study                          | OE, WE, WL1      | 5.9.93;381  |
| Article translation                    | OE, WE, WL1      | 5.9.93;382  |
| Attitude toward L1 in school           | OE               | 6.8.93;447  |
| Attitude toward CD stories             | OE, WE, OL1      | 5.19.93;422 |
| Attitude toward computer               | N/A              | 1.29.93.;36 |
| Attitude toward computer               | OE, WE           | 1.30.93.;59 |
| Attitude toward English use in home    | OE, OL1          | 3.13.93;210 |
| Attitude toward ESOL pullout           | OE, WE           | 4.6.93;254  |
| Attitude toward going home             | OE               | 5.23.93;434 |
| Attitude toward intelligence           | OE               | 1.26.93;16  |
| Attitude toward interviewing           | OE, WE           | 5.26.93;441 |
| Attitude toward Khmer on computer      | OE, WE, OL1, WL1 | 2.20.93;140 |
| Attitude toward L1                     | OE, WE, OL1, WL1 | 2.23.93;146 |
| Attitude toward L1 on computer         | OE, WE, OL1, WL1 | 3.10.93;198 |
| Attitude toward researcher's Khmer     | OE, OL1, WL1     | 2.24.93;155 |
| Attitude toward saving work            | OE, WE           | 4.14.93;274 |
| Attitude toward uniforms               | OE, WE, OL1      | 2.9.93;93   |
| Attitudes toward L1 - parent and child | OE, OL1          | 5.18.93;417 |
| BEV                                    | OE               | 4.7.93;264  |
| Bilingual medical list                 | OE, WE, OL1, WL1 | 3.13.93;203 |
| Biliteracy                             | OE, WE, WL1      | 2.13.93;120 |
| Book attitudes                         | OE, WE           | 5.18.93;413 |
| Cambodian anthem                       | OE, OL1          | 5.12.93;408 |
| Cambodian anthem                       | OE, OL1          | 5.23.93;437 |

|                                      |                  |             |
|--------------------------------------|------------------|-------------|
| Cambodian anthem                     | OL1              | 5.19.93;424 |
| CD story                             | OE, WE           | 5.19.93;423 |
| Checking Khmer                       | OE, WE, OL1, WL1 | 2.26.93;162 |
| Checking lists                       | OE, WE, OL1, WL1 | 3.23.93;229 |
| Child attitude toward Khmer          | OE, WE, OL1, WL1 | 4.20.93;279 |
| Child calls for mother               | OE               | 2.27.93;166 |
| Child care                           | OE, OL1          | 5.23.93;433 |
| Child care                           | OL1              | 4.21.93;295 |
| Child care                           | OL1, WL2         | 4.23.93;305 |
| Child knowledge of L1                | OE, OL1, WL1     | 5.5.93;373  |
| Child late from school               | N/A              | 3.3.93;172  |
| Children's use of computer at school | OE               | 1.26.93;6   |
| Chinese lessons for children         | OE, OL1, WL1     | 3.9.93;188  |
| Class work                           | OE, WE, OL1      | 5.9.93;379  |
| Collab. story                        | WE               | 2.17.93;125 |
| Community meeting - lg. attitudes    | OE, OL1          | 6.7.93;446  |
| Community meeting - setting desc.    | WE, WL1          | 6.7.93;445  |
| Computer and geography               | OE, WE           | 2.9.93;87   |
| Computer assignment                  | OE, WE, OL1      | 1.27.93;31  |
| Computer bought                      | OE               | 4.13.93;271 |
| Computer drawing                     | N/A              | 3.24.93;234 |
| Computer drawing                     | WE               | 2.17.93;126 |
| Computer drawing                     | WE               | 3.3.93;182  |
| Computer drawing                     | WE               | 4.7.93;265  |
| Computer game                        | OE, WE           | 4.21.93;288 |
| Computer games                       | OE               | 5.11.93;398 |
| Computer interest                    | OE, OL1          | 2.23.93;153 |
| Computer interest                    | OE, OL1          | 4.13.93;270 |
| Computer lesson                      | OE, WE           | 1.27.93;26  |
| Computer lesson                      | OE, WE           | 2.2.93;70   |
| Computer needs                       | OE               | 4.27.93;334 |
| Computer play                        | OE, OL1          | 2.20.93;139 |
| Computer play                        | OE, WE           | 2.9.93;85   |
| Computer play                        | OE, WE           | 2.9.93;86   |
| Computer play                        | OE, WE, OL1, WL1 | 2.23.93;150 |
| Computer problems                    | OE, WE           | 5.18.93;411 |

|                                  |                  |             |
|----------------------------------|------------------|-------------|
| Computer set-up                  | N/A              | 1.29.93;48  |
| Computer set-up                  | OE, OL1          | 1.26.93;5   |
| Computer set-up                  | OE, OL1          | 1.30.93;51  |
| Computer text - Khmer            | WL1              | 2.13.93;121 |
| Computer text                    | WE               | 1.27.93;25  |
| Computer text                    | WE               | 2.3.93;80   |
| Computer text                    | WE, WL1          | 1.29.93;39  |
| Computer text                    | WE, WL2          | 1.30.93;53  |
| Computer text                    | WE?              | 2.2.93;65   |
| Computer text                    | WL1              | 2.10.93;104 |
| Computer text                    | WL1              | 2.26.93;161 |
| Computer text                    | WL1              | 2.9.93;92   |
| Computer work scene              | OE, WE           | 1.26.93;7   |
| Cultural fusion - jump rope      | OE               | 4.23.93;317 |
| Cultural maintenance - food      | OE, WE           | 4.23.93;314 |
| Cultural maintenance - New Years | OE, OL1          | 4.23.93;311 |
| Depression                       | OE               | 5.5.93;371  |
| Dictionary use                   | OE, WE, WL1      | 2.13.93;122 |
| Dictionary use                   | WE, WL1          | 2.20.93;143 |
| Dinner                           | OE, OL1          | 1.26.93;15  |
| Discussion of elections          | OE, WE           | 5.9.93;387  |
| Discussion of Norodom family     | OE               | 5.9.93;388  |
| Drawing a classroom              | OE, WE, OL1      | 2.26.93;164 |
| Drawing and Khmer                | OE, OL1, WL1     | 2.13.93;115 |
| Drawing at SEAMAAC               | OE, WE           | 3.10.93;192 |
| Drawing Chinese                  | OE, OL1, WL1     | 2.2.93;71   |
| Drawing editing                  | OE, WE           | 4.14.93;275 |
| Drawing                          | OE               | 3.10.93;194 |
| Drawing                          | OE, WE, OL1      | 4.7.93;261  |
| Drawing                          | WE               | 3.3.93;181  |
| Drawing/writing alone            | OE, WE           | 2.2.93;64   |
| Editing L1 recording             | OE, OL1, WL1     | 3.9.93;187  |
| Electronic communication         | OE, WE           | 3.23.93;228 |
| English use at home              | OE, OL1          | 2.2.93;73   |
| Ethnic identity - food           | OE, OL1          | 5.11.93;396 |
| Exploration on Computer          | OE, WE, OL1, WL1 | 4.7.93;259  |

|                               |                  |             |
|-------------------------------|------------------|-------------|
| Exploring and drawing         | OE, WE, OL1      | 5.5.93;369  |
| Family struct.                | N/A              | 1.29.93;40  |
| Game play                     | OE, WE           | 4.21.93;292 |
| Game play                     | OE, WE           | 4.23.93;307 |
| Game play                     | OE, WE           | 4.23.93;313 |
| Game playing - reading        | OE, WE           | 4.27.93;337 |
| Game playing - Spell It       | OE, WE, OL1      | 3.10.93;200 |
| Game playing - unknown player | OE, WE           | 5.4.93;358  |
| Game playing                  | OE               | 2.2.93;72   |
| Game playing                  | OE               | 4.13.93;267 |
| Game playing                  | OE               | 4.27.93;335 |
| Game playing                  | OE, WE           | 3.10.93;201 |
| Game playing                  | OE, WE           | 4.21.93;294 |
| Game playing                  | OE, WE           | 4.27.93;328 |
| Game playing                  | OE, WE           | 4.6.93;253  |
| Game playing                  | OE, WE           | 5.4.93;352  |
| Game playing                  | OE, WE, OL1      | 2.10.93;108 |
| Game playing                  | OE, WE, OL1      | 3.24.93;232 |
| Game playing                  | OE, WE, OL1      | 4.28.93;340 |
| Game playing                  | OE, WE, OL1, WL1 | 2.3.93;82   |
| Geographic knowledge          | OE               | 5.4.93;354  |
| High School                   | WE               | 2.18.93;134 |
| High school                   | OE, WE           | 2.17.93;123 |
| Home description - photos     | NA               | 5.23.93;436 |
| Home description              | WE               | 5.9.93;390  |
| Home description              | WE, WL2          | 3.23.93;226 |
| Home remedies                 | OE               | 5.4.93;362  |
| Home Scene - computer use     | OE, WE, OL1      | 4.27.93;326 |
| Home Scene                    | OE, OL1          | 4.28.93;339 |
| Home Scene                    | OE, WE, OL1      | 5.5.93;364  |
| Home scene - Cambodian food   | OE, OL1          | 1.30.93;58  |
| Home scene - conversation     | OE, OL1          | 3.13.93;208 |
| Home scene - eat on floor     | OE               | 3.13.93;207 |
| Home scene - employment       | OE, OL1 (?)      | 5.12.93;402 |
| Home scene - food             | N/A              | 2.13.93;117 |
| Home scene - food             | N/A              | 3.17.93;225 |

|                                |             |             |
|--------------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Home scene - food              | NA          | 5.23.93;432 |
| Home scene - food              | OE          | 4.23.93;306 |
| Home scene - food              | OE          | 5.11.93;397 |
| Home scene - food              | OE, WE      | 4.21.93;296 |
| Home scene - Good bye          | OE          | 1.29.93;47  |
| Home scene - homework          | OE, W       | 3.30.93;235 |
| Home scene - hospitality       | OE          | 1.30.93;61  |
| Home scene - Khmer dancing     | OL1         | 1.29.93;44  |
| Home scene - money             | OL1         | 5.23.93;438 |
| Home scene - music             | OL1         | 5.23.93;435 |
| Home scene - pictures          | N/A         | 3.9.93;191  |
| Home scene - privacy, homework | OE, WE, OL1 | 4.14.93;272 |
| Home scene - rats              | N/A         | 5.9.93;389  |
| Home scene - shopping          | OE          | 5.11.93;400 |
| Home scene - Shrines           | OE, WE, WL1 | 4.6.93;251  |
| Home scene - sickness          | OE          | 3.3.93;171  |
| Home scene - TV                | OE, OL1     | 1.30.93;50  |
| Home scene - VCR               | OL1         | 1.29.93;45  |
| Home scene                     | N/A         | 4.13.93;266 |
| Home scene                     | N/A         | 4.21.93;285 |
| Home scene                     | N/A         | 4.7.93;255  |
| Home scene                     | N/A         | 5.19.93;420 |
| Home scene                     | OE          | 1.30.93;49  |
| Home scene                     | OE          | 2.9.93;83   |
| Home scene                     | OE          | 3.16.93;211 |
| Home scene                     | OE          | 4.23.93;299 |
| Home scene                     | OE, OL1     | 2.13.93;112 |
| Home scene                     | OE, OL1     | 3.13.93;202 |
| Home scene                     | OE, OL1     | 4.23.93;300 |
| Home scene                     | OE, OL1     | 4.6.93;246  |
| Home scene                     | OE, OL1     | 5.11.93;395 |
| Home scene                     | OE, OL1     | 5.9.93;377  |
| Home scene                     | OE, WE      | 2.10.93;98  |
| Home scene                     | OE, WE      | 2.18.93;129 |
| Home scene                     | OE, WE      | 2.26.93;157 |
| Home scene                     | OE, WE      | 3.17.93;221 |



|                                   |                       |             |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------|
| Home scene                        | OE, WE                | 3.24.93;231 |
| Home scene                        | OE, WE                | 5.4.93;351  |
| Home scene                        | OE, WE, OL1           | 2.26.93;158 |
| Home scene                        | OE, WE, OL1, WL1      | 1.29.93;41  |
| Home scene                        | OL1                   | 1.29.93;35  |
| Home scene                        | OL1                   | 2.20.93;137 |
| Home scene                        | OL1                   | 5.23.93;427 |
| Homework - attitude               | OE, OL1               | 2.2.93;62   |
| Homework - Computer use           | WE                    | 3.10.93;196 |
| Homework - description            | OE, WE, OL1, WL1      | 4.6.93;249  |
| Homework - easy                   | OE, WE                | 4.27.93;327 |
| Homework - easy                   | OE, WE                | 4.27.93;338 |
| Homework - La makes Chon get help | OE, WE, OL1           | 5.5.93;367  |
| Homework - Lang                   | WE, WL1               | 2.23.93;145 |
| Homework - Lang's                 | OE, WE, WL1           | 3.9.93;190  |
| Homework - Parent/child           | OE, WE, OL1           | 3.2.93;167  |
| Homework - remedy list            | WE, WL1               | 3.16.93;214 |
| Homework - request for help       | OE, WE                | 2.9.93;96   |
| Homework - school                 | WE1                   | 2.2.93;69   |
| Homework - translation            | OE, WE, OL1, WL1      | 2.10.93;107 |
| Homework assignment for Ky        | WE                    | 2.26.93;165 |
| Homework assignment               | OE, WE, WL1           | 2.2.93;74   |
| Homework assignment               | WE                    | 2.2.93;67   |
| Homework finished                 | OE, WE                | 5.12.93;403 |
| Homework from SEAMAAC             | OE, WE                | 3.10.93;199 |
| Homework help - Lounh             | OE, WE, OL1           | 5.5.93;366  |
| Homework help                     | OE, WE                | 2.18.93;136 |
| Homework help                     | OE, WE                | 2.23.93;147 |
| Homework help                     | OE, WE, OL1           | 1.26.93;3   |
| Homework                          | OE, WE, OL1, WL1, WL2 | 2.9.93;88   |
| Homework scene                    | OE, WE                | 1.26.93;2   |
| Homework trouble - Chon           | OE, WE                | 5.5.93;368  |
| Homework trouble - Lounh          | OE, WE                | 5.5.93;365  |
| Homework                          | WE                    | 2.17.93;127 |
| Homework                          | WE                    | 2.3.93;77   |
| Husband not around                | OE, OL1               | 1.26.93;4   |

|                                    |                  |             |
|------------------------------------|------------------|-------------|
| Individual characteristic          | OE               | 4.21.93;291 |
| Individual description - Sambo     | N/A              | 4.7.93;257  |
| Khmer alphabet on computer         | OE, OL1, WL1     | 4.28.93;345 |
| Khmer alphabet on computer         | OE, OL1, WL1     | 5.9.93;383  |
| Khmer correction                   | OE, WE, WL1      | 5.9.93;378  |
| Khmer font trouble                 | OE, WL1          | 2.10.93;105 |
| Khmer lesson - writing             | OE, OL1, WL1     | 5.9.93;385  |
| Khmer recording                    | OE, WE, OL1, WL1 | 4.14.93;277 |
| Khmer recording                    | OL1              | 5.9.93;384  |
| Khmer writing focus                | OE, WL1          | 2.10.93;106 |
| Khmer writing ignored              | OE, WE, OL1, WL1 | 2.26.93;163 |
| Khmer writing                      | OE, WL1          | 2.10.93;99  |
| Knowledge of home remedies         | OE, WE           | 3.16.93;218 |
| Knowledge of snakes                | OE, WE           | 3.13.93;209 |
| L1 recording                       | OE, OL1, WL1     | 3.2.93;169  |
| L1 textbook                        | OE, WE, OL1, WL1 | 3.30.93;239 |
| L1 use for transliteration         | OE, WE, WL1      | 4.23.93;303 |
| L1 writing interest                | OE, WL1          | 2.9.93;90   |
| Language use                       | OE, OL1          | 5.18.93;410 |
| Latin interest                     | OE, Latin        | 5.18.93;416 |
| Learning about the computer        | OE, WE, OL1, WL1 | 2.23.93;149 |
| Letter - text                      | WE               | 3.16.93;215 |
| Letter editing                     | OE, WE           | 3.16.93;213 |
| Letter from Lang                   | WE               | 3.2.93;170  |
| Letter on the computer             | OE, WE           | 2.26.93;159 |
| Letter/song - Lang                 | OE, WE           | 3.9.93;189  |
| Librarian uses wrong name          | OE               | 5.3.93;350  |
| Library 'children's only' section  | OE, WE           | 5.3.93;348  |
| Library - Family                   | N/A              | 4.26.93;321 |
| Library - homework help            | OE, WE           | 4.26.93;322 |
| Library - homework help            | OE, WE           | 4.26.93;324 |
| Library - parents                  | OE, WE, OL1      | 4.26.93;325 |
| Library - pick up children         | N/A              | 2.2.93;75   |
| Library - socializing              | OE, WE, OL1      | 4.26.93;323 |
| Library activity - games, not work | OE, WE           | 6.9.93;448  |
| Library activity                   | OE, WE, OL1      | 5.10.93;392 |

|                                          |                  |             |
|------------------------------------------|------------------|-------------|
| Library activity                         | OE, WE, OL1      | 5.10.93;394 |
| Library computer                         | ?                | 5.10.93;391 |
| Library computer                         | OE               | 5.4.93;363  |
| Library computer                         | WE               | 5.3.93;347  |
| Library computer                         | WE, OE, OL1      | 4.26.93;320 |
| Library in the Rain                      | NA               | 4.26.93;318 |
| Library languages                        | WE, WL1          | 4.26.93;319 |
| Library                                  | N/A              | 1.27.93.;33 |
| Library                                  | N/A              | 2.23.93;152 |
| Library                                  | N/A              | 3.9.93;186  |
| Library                                  | N/A              | 5.5.93;370  |
| Library                                  | OE, WE, OL1      | 1.27.93.;20 |
| Library                                  | OE, WE, OL1      | 2.9.93;97   |
| Library search for children              | OE               | 5.3.93;349  |
| Library trip                             | N/A              | 5.5.93;376  |
| Library trip                             | OE               | 2.10.93;110 |
| Library trip                             | OE, WE           | 4.21.93;297 |
| Library use                              | OE, OL1          | 2.23.93;148 |
| Library visit                            | OE               | 5.10.93;393 |
| Library visit                            | OE, WE, OL1      | 3.10.93;197 |
| library - homework                       | OE, WE           | 2.2.93;76   |
| Names                                    | OE, OL1          | 1.29.93.;37 |
| NCAL Brochure                            | OE, WE, OL1      | 2.13.93;111 |
| Newsletter change                        | WE               | 2.23.93;151 |
| Newsletter                               | OE, WE           | 2.2.93;63   |
| Newsletter                               | OE, WE           | 2.9.93;84   |
| Newsletter                               | OE, WE, OL1, WL1 | 2.20.93;138 |
| Newsletter.                              | OE, WE, WL1      | 2.2.93;66   |
| Nintendo                                 | OE, OL1          | 1.26.93;17  |
| Obscenity in crayon                      | WE               | 5.30.93;442 |
| Parent attitude toward children's L1     | OE, OL1          | 5.4.93;361  |
| Parent-child communication               | OE, OL1          | 3.16.93;212 |
| Parents at meeting                       | OE               | 6.7.93;444  |
| Participant struct. - Child interference | OE, WE, OL1, WL1 | 2.10.93;103 |
| Participant struct. - Collab. game       | OE, WE           | 5.5.93;375  |
| Participant struct. - Collab. HW         | OE, WE, OL1, WL1 | 2.13.93;119 |

|                                       |                  |             |
|---------------------------------------|------------------|-------------|
| Participant struct. - Collab. play    | OE, WE, OL1      | 2.9.93;95   |
| Participant struct. - Collab. task    | OE, WE, OL1      | 1.27.93.;29 |
| Participant struct. - Collab. writing | OE, WE           | 1.30.93.;55 |
| Participant struct. - Collab. writing | OE, WE, OL1      | 1.27.93.;23 |
| Participant struct. - Collab. writing | OE, WE, OL1      | 1.27.93.;24 |
| Participant struct. - Collab. writing | OE, WE, OL1      | 1.30.93.;54 |
| Participant struct. - Collab. writing | OE, WE, OL1, WL1 | 1.27.93.;22 |
| Participant struct. - Collab. writing | OE, WE, OL1, WL1 | 1.29.93.;38 |
| Participant struct. - Collab. writing | OE, WE, WL1      | 1.30.93.;52 |
| Participant struct. - Collab. writing | OE, WE, WL1      | 2.9.93;89   |
| Participant struct. - Competition     | OE, WE           | 2.18.93;135 |
| Participant struct. - Competition     | OE, WE, OL1      | 1.29.93.;46 |
| Participant struct. - Competition     | OE, WE, OL1      | 1.30.93.;57 |
| Participant struct. - Competition     | OE, WE, OL1      | 2.13.93;114 |
| Participant struct. - Competition     | OE, WE, OL1      | 2.9.93;94   |
| Participant struct. - competition     | OE               | 3.23.93;230 |
| Participant struct. - competition     | OE, WE, OL1      | 1.30.93.;60 |
| Participant struct. - Correction      | OE, WE           | 2.9.93;91   |
| Participant struct. - Div. of labor   | OE, WE, OL1      | 1.26.93;11  |
| Participant struct. - Div. of labor   | OE, WE, OL1, WL1 | 1.26.93;10  |
| Participant struct. - Drawing         | OE, OL1          | 1.27.93.;28 |
| Participant struct. - Drawing         | OE, OL1          | 1.29.93.;42 |
| Participant struct. - Drawing         | OE, OL1          | 1.30.93.;56 |
| Participant struct. - Drawing         | OE, WE, OL1      | 4.7.93;263  |
| Participant struct. - Drawing sharing | OE, WE, OL1      | 3.10.93;193 |
| Participant struct. - Exploring CD    | OE, WE           | 5.18.93;412 |
| Participant struct. - game play       | OE, WE           | 4.23.93;308 |
| Participant struct. - game play       | OE, WE, OL1      | 1.26.93;13  |
| Participant struct. - helping         | OE, WE, OL1      | 1.26.93;9   |
| Participant struct. - Home Work       | OE, WE           | 1.27.93.;19 |
| Participant struct. - individual      | OE, WE, OL1      | 1.26.93;12  |
| Participant struct. - L1 on computer  | OE, WE, OL1, WL1 | 4.23.93;304 |
| Participant struct. - multilingualism | OE, WE, OL1      | 4.23.93;309 |
| Participant struct. - No interaction  | OE, WE           | 5.12.93;406 |
| Participant struct. - Parent Child    | OE, WE, OL1, WL1 | 4.6.93;250  |
| Participant struct. - Parent child    | OE, WE           | 4.20.93;284 |

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|-------------------------------------------|------------------|-------------|
| Participant struct. - Parent child        | OE, WE           | 4.21.93;290 |
| Participant struct. - parent child        | OE, WE, OL1      | 4.23.93;301 |
| Participant struct. - Parent/Child        | OE, OL1, WL1     | 2.26.93;160 |
| Participant struct. - Parent/Child        | OE, WE, OL1, WL1 | 2.20.93;144 |
| Participant struct. - Parent/child        | OE, OL1          | 5.19.93;425 |
| Participant struct. - Parent/child        | OE, OL1          | 5.4.93;355  |
| Participant struct. - Parent/child        | OE, WE           | 5.4.93;353  |
| Participant struct. - Parent/child        | OE, WE, OL1      | 2.10.93;101 |
| Participant struct. - Parent/child        | OE, WE, OL1      | 2.13.93;113 |
| Participant struct. - Parent/child        | OE, WE, OL1      | 2.13.93;116 |
| Participant struct. - Parent/child        | OE, WE, OL1      | 2.13.93;118 |
| Participant struct. - Parent/child        | OE, WE, OL1      | 2.2.93;68   |
| Participant struct. - Parent/child        | OE, WE, OL1      | 2.20.93;141 |
| Participant struct. - Parent/child        | OE, WE, OL1      | 2.20.93;142 |
| Participant struct. - Parent/child        | OE, WE, OL1      | 3.16.93;220 |
| Participant struct. - Parent/child        | OE, WE, OL1      | 3.17.93;222 |
| Participant struct. - Parent/child        | OE, WE, OL1      | 3.23.93;227 |
| Participant struct. - Parent/child        | OE, WE, OL1      | 3.3.93;185  |
| Participant struct. - Parent/child        | OE, WE, OL1      | 3.30.93;236 |
| Participant struct. - Parent/child        | OE, WE, OL1      | 3.31.93;242 |
| Participant struct. - Parent/child        | OE, WE, OL1      | 3.31.93;243 |
| Participant struct. - Parent/child        | OE, WE, OL1      | 4.27.93;336 |
| Participant struct. - Parent/child        | OE, WE, OL1      | 4.28.93;341 |
| Participant struct. - Parent/child        | OE, WE, OL1      | 4.28.93;342 |
| Participant struct. - Parent/child        | OE, WE, OL1      | 4.28.93;343 |
| Participant struct. - Parent/child        | OE, WE, OL1      | 4.28.93;344 |
| Participant struct. - Parent/child        | OE, WE, OL1      | 4.6.93;252  |
| Participant struct. - Parent/child        | OE, WE, OL1      | 5.4.93;360  |
| Participant struct. - Parent/child        | OE, WE, OL1      | 6.1.93;443  |
| Participant struct. - Parent/child        | OE, WE, OL1, WL1 | 3.16.93;216 |
| Participant struct. - Parent/child        | OE, WE, OL1, WL1 | 4.7.93;256  |
| Participant struct. - reading newsletter  | OE, WE, OL1, WL1 | 2.18.93;130 |
| Participant struct. - sibling             | OE, WE           | 4.21.93;289 |
| Participant struct. - sibling turn taking | OE, WE           | 4.23.93;315 |
| Participant struct. - sibling comp. use   | OE, WE, OL1      | 4.7.93;258  |
| Participant struct. - sibling help        | OE, WE           | 4.21.93;286 |



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|-------------------------------------------|------------------|-------------|
| Participant struct. - Siblings drawing    | OE, WE, OL1      | 3.17.93;224 |
| Participant struct. - Siblings            | OE, OL1          | 2.23.93;154 |
| Participant struct. - Siblings            | OE, WE, OL1      | 3.17.93;223 |
| Participant struct. - Siblings            | OE, WE, OL1      | 4.14.93;273 |
| Participant struct. - Siblings            | OE, WE, OL1      | 4.7.93;262  |
| Participant struct. - Siblings            | OE, WE, OL1      | 5.12.93;407 |
| Participant struct. - Siblings            | OE, WE, OL1      | 5.12.93;409 |
| Participant struct. - Siblings            | WE               | 3.3.93;183  |
| Participant struct. - siblings            | OE, OL1          | 5.23.93;431 |
| Participant struct. - siblings            | OE, WE           | 5.19.93;421 |
| Participant struct. - siblings            | OE, WE, OL1      | 2.17.93;124 |
| Participant struct. - sitting arrangement | OE, WE, OL1      | 5.4.93;359  |
| Participant struct. - Spelling            | OE, WE           | 2.17.93;128 |
| Participant struct. - Trans.              | OE, WE, OL1      | 1.26.93;8   |
| Participant struct. - Turn taking         | OE, WE           | 1.27.93;30  |
| Participant struct. - Turn taking         | OE, WE, OL1      | 1.27.93;27  |
| Participant struct. - Turn taking         | OE, WE, OL1      | 1.29.93;43  |
| Participant struct. - Turn taking         | OE, WE, OL1      | 2.10.93;100 |
| Participant struct. - Turn taking         | OE, WE, OL1      | 2.10.93;109 |
| Participant struct. - Writing Khmer       | OE, OL1, WL1     | 2.10.93;102 |
| Participant struct. - writing for another | WE               | 3.24.93;233 |
| PFS newsletter games                      | OE, WE, OL1, WL1 | 4.23.93;310 |
| PFS newsletter photo                      | OE, WE, OL1      | 4.23.93;312 |
| Printer ad                                | OE, WE, OL1      | 5.11.93;399 |
| Printer bought - fun with money           | OE               | 5.18.93;418 |
| Printing                                  | OE, WE, OL1, WL1 | 4.20.93;278 |
| Printing scores                           | OE, WE           | 4.20.93;281 |
| Puzzle                                    | OE               | 5.5.93;374  |
| Questions answered                        | OE, WE           | 5.4.93;357  |
| Questions copied from computer            | WE               | 5.4.93;356  |
| Reading aloud own writing                 | OE, WE           | 4.27.93;330 |
| Reading newsletter                        | OE, WE, OL1, WL1 | 3.2.93;168  |
| Recipe - changes                          | OE, WE           | 4.27.93;329 |
| Recipe correction                         | OE, WE           | 4.20.93;280 |
| Recipe correction                         | OE, WE, WL1      | 4.6.93;247  |
| Recipe description                        | OE               | 4.13.93;269 |



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|---------------------------------|------------------|-------------|
| Recipe instruction - approach   | OE               | 4.13.93;268 |
| Recipe                          | OE, WE, OL1, WL1 | 3.30.93;237 |
| Recorded Khmer                  | OE, WE, OL1, WL1 | 5.5.93;372  |
| Recording L1                    | OE, WE, OL1, WL2 | 4.14.93;276 |
| Report cards                    | OE, WE           | 3.30.93;241 |
| SEAMAAC work                    | OE, WE           | 4.21.93;287 |
| Set up                          | OE, WE, OL1      | 1.27.93;21  |
| Spelling play                   | OE, WE           | 4.20.93;283 |
| Stories - Aesop's Fables        | OE, WE           | 5.12.93;404 |
| Stories - description           | WE               | 3.3.93;179  |
| Stories - Editing               | OE, WE           | 3.3.93;180  |
| Stories - Parent interest       | OE, WE           | 3.10.93;195 |
| Stories by others - no interest | OE, WE           | 4.27.93;333 |
| Story - Chon                    | WE               | 3.3.93;175  |
| Story - Lounh                   | WE               | 3.3.93;178  |
| Story - Reth and Chon           | WE               | 3.3.93;176  |
| Story - Sambo                   | WE               | 3.3.93;177  |
| Story about America             | OE, WE           | 4.27.93;332 |
| Story authorship dispute        | OE, WE           | 3.3.93;184  |
| Story copied                    | OE, WE           | 3.16.93;219 |
| Story description/ critique     | OE, WE           | 4.27.93;331 |
| Story disk                      | OE, WE           | 5.12.93;405 |
| Story illustration              | OE, WE           | 2.3.93;79   |
| Storybook - Description         | WE               | 2.3.93;78   |
| Storybooks - Children           | WE               | 3.3.93;174  |
| Storybooks - La's               | WE, WL1          | 3.3.93;173  |
| Tantrum                         | OE, OL1          | 5.19.93;426 |
| Text description                | OE, WE, OL1, WL1 | 4.23.93;302 |
| Text editing                    | OE, WE, WL1      | 2.18.93;133 |
| Text editing                    | OE, WL1          | 2.18.93;131 |
| Text editing                    | OE, WL1          | 2.18.93;132 |
| Translation correction          | WE, WL1          | 5.24.93;440 |
| Translation description         | WE, WL1          | 5.23.93;428 |
| Translation                     | OE, WE, WL1      | 5.23.93;439 |
| Translation trouble             | OE, WE, WL1      | 5.23.93;429 |
| TV watching - Sambo             | OE, WE           | 4.21.93;293 |

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|------------------------------------|------------------|-------------|
| TV watching                        | OE, WE, OL1      | 1.27.93.;32 |
| Video from Cambodia                | OL1              | 5.18.93;414 |
| Video watching                     | OL1              | 4.23.93;316 |
| Video-game playing                 | OL1              | 4.20.93;282 |
| Visit commentary                   | OE               | 5.11.93;401 |
| Visit to Ky's                      | OE               | 4.23.93;298 |
| Word study                         | OE, WE           | 4.6.93;248  |
| Word study on computer             | OE, WE           | 5.9.93;386  |
| Writing and Recording L1           | OE, WE, OL1, WL1 | 3.31.93;244 |
| Writing difficulty                 | OE, WE           | 2.3.93;81   |
| Writing erased                     | OE, WE           | 5.18.93;415 |
| Writing for another                | OE, WE           | 4.28.93;346 |
| Writing in Khmer                   | OE, OL1, WL1     | 4.7.93;260  |
| Writing in L1                      | OE, WE, OL1, WL1 | 3.30.93;240 |
| Writing L1 - Children              | OE, WL1          | 3.13.93;205 |
| Writing L1                         | OE, WE, OL1, WL1 | 3.31.93;245 |
| Writing L1 on the computer         | OE, WE, OL1, WL1 | 3.13.93;204 |
| Writing L1 on the computer         | OE, WE, OL1, WL1 | 3.13.93;206 |
| Writing L1 translation on computer | OE, WE, OL1, WL1 | 5.23.93;430 |
| Writing on computer                | OE, WE           | 5.18.93;419 |
| Writing purpose?                   | OE, WE           | 2.24.93;156 |

## **Appendix D:** **Interview protocol<sup>1</sup>**

### **Interview questions for program staff**

1. How is participation promoted in the southeast Asian community? How do you feel about participation rates? What are your explanations for variation in participation in the program? Why do students stop coming? What is the average length of participation?
2. How do you choose textbooks for SACA?
3. What is your goal for the students in the adult ESL program? How would you measure its success? Do you know of someone who benefited from the program?
4. What purposes does the program serve for the southeast Asian community?
5. Do you know of any programs in adult education in Khmer?
6. Should bilingualism/biliteracy be promoted in the Cambodian community? If so, should the adult ESL program be supportive of or unrelated to such a promotion?

### **Interview questions for teachers**

1. How would you describe your over-all approach to teaching reading and writing in English?
2. How do you choose the materials that you use?

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<sup>1</sup>These protocols were developed with Dr. Nancy Hornberger and Tom Hickey as part of Dr. Hornberger's "Literacy in Two Languages" research project.

3. Do you think students' Khmer/Spanish literacy, and your own fluency in Khmer/Spanish helped learning in the classroom?
4. What are your goals for the students?
5. How do you assess students' progress?
6. Do you think students should maintain Khmer/Puerto Rican culture and literacy in Khmer/Spanish?
7. What are some of the reasons that adults get involved in this program? How do they hear about it? What are some of the reasons that they stop coming?

### **Interview questions for students**

#### *Part 1: Family language use and daily life*

**Question 1:** What do you do during the day? I'd like you to begin with the first thing you do in the morning and describe the activities you usually do during a typical day. Please include places you might go to or people you might talk to.

Subquestion a: (If interviewee watches TV) What are your favorite TV shows?

Subquestion b: (If interviewee reads the newspaper) Which is our favorite newspaper? (If interviewee does not read the newspaper) Do you find that you never have time to read anything? Why is this?

Subquestion c: (If interviewee mentions neighbors) Do the neighbors in this area get along with each other?

**Focus:** Locate possible literacy activities that serve as points for further discussion.

**Question 2:** Who do you live with?

**Focus:** Locate the people who might be sources of literacy learning or literacy attitudes.

**Question 3:** You've told me what you do during a typical day. Can you tell me what X does during the day?

Subquestion a: Does X enjoy doing Y?

Subquestion b: Do you/your siblings/your children study at home?

Subquestion c: What does our child enjoy reading at home?

Subquestion d: Does your child enjoy listening to stories? What kind of stories? Would your child rather listen to you read a story from a book or just tell it?

Subquestion e: Are your children/siblings fluent in Khmer/Spanish?

Subquestion f: Have you been to your children's school?

Subquestion g: Do you know if your children's school has computers? Do your children use them?

Subquestion h: Do you know your children's teachers? Have you met them? (Try to get names)

Subquestion i: Are there any adults in you household who are going to adult education classes? What are they learning? Are they dissatisfied in any way?

**Focus:** Gauge the adult's involvement in the child's literacy development; uncover the adult's attitudes toward the importance of literacy (in both L1 and L2); uncover degree of adult's contact with schools.

**Question 4:** When our family is all together, what are the kinds of things that you do?

Subquestion a: When is the family most often together?

**Focus:** Describe the most common family activities and the degree of literacy skills required.

**Question 5:** What's a typical meal like?

Subquestion a: Who speaks the most during the meal?

Subquestion b: What language is spoken during meals?

**Focus:** Measure relative balance of L1/L2 in the home environment.

*Part 2: Context of family language use*

**Question 1:** Tell me about where you grew up. Tell me as much as you can remember.

**Focus:** Locate possible influences on attitudes.

**Question 2:** What did your parents do?

Subquestion a: Were they able to go to school?

Subquestion b: Did they tell or read you stories when you were young?

Subquestion c: If so, do you tell the same stories to your children?

**Focus:** Uncover possible methods of transmission of literacy skills.

**Question 3:** What was school like when you were a child? Did you enjoy it?

**Focus:** Uncover parents' attitudes towards schooling.

**Question 4:** As you grew up, what kind of work experiences did you have?

**Focus:** Use of literacy skills in the workplace.

**Question 5:** When did you come to Philadelphia? What brought you here instead of some other place?

**Focus:** Set context for adult's learning of English (length of residence, social distance from target language group, group cohesion, etc.)



**Question 6:** What would you like to do in the future? Where would you like to be?

**Focus:** Uncover possible motivations for attitudes toward L2.

**Question 7:** When was the last time your extended family got together?

Subquestion a: When your extended family last got together, were there a large number of children? Did the adults and children interact very much or did the children play by themselves?

Subquestion b: Do you plan to visit friends and family in your home country at any time in the future?

Subquestion c: Would you like to see them again? Do you think you will?

**Focus:** Uncover role of L1 in family life, family cohesion.

**Interview questions for students' children**

Question 1. What did you do yesterday?

Question 2: Do you like to watch TV?

Question 3: Do you ever read anything not related to school? What?

Question 4: Do you like your neighborhood? What do you like/not like about it?

Question 5: How long do you work on homework everyday?

Question 6: Do you do your homework by yourself or does someone help you? Who? How?

Question 7: How's school going? What subjects do you like? Tell me about your classmates and your teacher.

Question 8: How much English do you speak at home? How much Khmer? What language do you speak with your brothers or sisters? Parents? Friends?

Question 9: Do you like Khmer? Do your parents want you to know more Khmer? Do you know why? Do you wish you knew more Khmer? Do your parents help you study Khmer?

Question 10: Do you have to help your parents sometimes (because they don't speak English as well as you)? Do you help your parents study English?

Question 11: Do your parents ever talk about where they grew up?

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